

*LIFE IS FOR LIVING*



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TORONTO

# *LIFE IS FOR LIVING*

*by* D. EWEN CAMERON, M.D.

PROFESSOR OF PSYCHIATRY, MCGILL UNIVERSITY; PSYCHIATRIST-IN-CHIEF, ROYAL VICTORIA HOSPITAL, DIRECTOR, ALLAN MEMORIAL INSTITUTE OF PSYCHIATRY. FORMERLY, PROFESSOR OF NEUROLOGY AND PSYCHIATRY, ALBANY MEDICAL COLLEGE; NEUROLOGIST AND PSYCHIATRIST-IN-CHIEF, ALBANY HOSPITAL.

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## INTRODUCTION

THIS BOOK HAS BEEN WRITTEN FOR THOSE OF US WHO ARE TRYING to grope our way through the confusions and the contradictory absurdities, the mortal dangers and the psychological pestilences of mid-century living. Save for a few, fortunate mainly by chance, we have still got only traditional viewpoints with which to outfit and arm ourselves—viewpoints unchanged as old crockery, rigid and cramping as ancestral suits of armor. Openly inadequate as guides and interpreters of life, they still persist. During those long periods of time when our culture was all but static they became so closely interwoven into our ways of living that they cannot readily be removed.

They have been yielding, however, to the tremendous indirect attacks made upon them through our material advances. Discoveries in physics and physiology, vast increases in mobility and in communication are pushing us into the necessity of working out equally vital and fertile ways of dealing with ourselves and with each other.

The old systems of beliefs concerning man and his world cannot supply these new ways. At their best they can evolve pretty uncompromising compromises. At their worst, and they are most frequently so, they constitute obstructions over which the torrent of human progress boils up with destructive violence—a destructiveness that stunts and maims individual lives and plays a no-

table part in the appalling wars, social collapse and epidemics of hostility which have distinguished our period of tenure of this earth.

New and more effective ways of managing our affairs are appearing but they are not coming into existence easily; they struggle everywhere with the old, the entrenched, and the vested. At this time it is by no means clear that these new ways of managing human affairs will succeed in gaining dominance before another of these dreadful catastrophes overtakes us. It is the obligation of all of us, especially of those of us who work with human relations, to forward these new designs of living to the best of our ability.

It is, then, in the conviction that life is for living and not for dying in some swirl of nationalistic hatred and hostility, not for bearing witness to some outworn ideological dogma, not for paying tribute to causeless anxieties and crippling guilt feelings or damaging beliefs with which we were indoctrinated in our childhood, that this book has been written.

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## CHAPTER I

### *FROM HOUR TO HOUR*

TWENTIETH CENTURY LIVING, LIKE TENTH CENTURY LIVING AND living in the dawn-days when social security was a matter of a fast-moving pair of legs, is a business which keeps most of us guessing, mostly wrong, most of the time. Our days, and half our nights, are a wavering chiaroscuro of people growing up, getting middle-aged and old and changing so that you hardly know how to talk when you see them again; people jumping off bridges and under trains; people leading lives dull and dreary and routine as dumb-waiters; people blazing with ecstasy, dying for ideals, dying from their own stupidities or living to bore others to death.

All the time we are wondering what it is all about, trying to find out from innumerable novels written by innumerable people who aren't sure either, from plays, from talking at the washing line, on the way home, from talks you pay for, from listening to yourself talk, from hundreds of philosophies and thousands of religions, from bad movies—the ones that make the most money by echoing back to you what you would like to believe.

Life for most people is appallingly confusing—confusing and frightening. More people are scared than you might think. People, by and large, have not much confidence in their ability to deal with the tricky business of thinking for themselves. They hang on the judgments of others, on precedents, and on authori-

tarian social institutions. They want to be reassured that everything is all right, that they are not standing alone, that other people think as they do. They don't want to take responsibility: the rewards have to be pretty enticing.

Hence the necessity of having someone who will take one's side always and without annoying questions. Hence the resentment when, on the odd occasion, our favorite listener turns sour.

It is this fear of living that made the able young teacher go to confession to relate her trifling sexual peccadillos. Her bright and forward looking mind has grasped long ago that they are of so little significance to herself or to anyone else that they do not deserve the title of indiscretions. But she has been brought up to feel so guilty about her sexual life that she cannot take the responsibility for even the smallest deviation from the standards which have been drilled into her.

She tries hard to carry the matter on her own shoulders and can succeed for awhile, but after two or three months she will again have to go to confession, with consequent relief and a feeling that somehow she has passed the responsibility on to someone else. And this next, in miniature, is the really serious issue. She now feels that she is free to start all over again. She does not feel that she needs to do anything about her inclinations themselves. Actually, by everyday standards, they are the sort of things that almost anyone would take in their stride. This is not important. What is of the greatest social significance is this dangerous device of passing responsibility for what we do on to someone else and leaving ourselves free to continue on without feeling that we have to take too seriously what we do, as long as someone else will tell us that it is all right.

At no other time have we had a better opportunity to see what does happen when great numbers of people become so confused, so baffled, and so frightened by the difficulties which they encounter in running their lives that they are willing to give up responsibility for their own actions. For this is precisely what took place in Germany throughout the 1920's and the 1930's. We are,

and rightly so, appalled at the almost inconceivable callousness to human suffering and the equally inconceivable lack of restraint upon brutality which has now come to light. Germans have treated prisoners of war and political prisoners, as well as those living in the occupied territories, as no other people have done within the reaches of written history. They have treated their own people, both Jewish and Aryan, in the same way and, with it all, there seems to be hardly a trace of guilt. Fear of punishment is there, fear that they will be judged by someone outside themselves and condemned, but no fear of self-judgment. There is, rather, a resentment that they should be judged by others as having done wrong.

On the surface this seems inexplicable, and men and women stand amazed and outraged that the Germans should not appreciate the enormity of what they have done. It seems likely that a great deal of effort, and vain effort at that, will be directed towards endeavoring to get the Germans to admit that they are guilty. The effort will be in vain in all probability, for the simple reason that under very little pressure from the Nazis the Germans gave up responsibility for their own actions. They each took refuge in the authority of the next man above them in the official scale and he on upwards until one reached the ludicrous finale where Goering, after his capture, could say that he simply "took orders."

Under the protection afforded by this giving up of their own judgment, this giving up of the direction of their own actions, they have done things so appalling, so dreadful, in such violent denial of the most elementary human decencies, that it is inconceivable that they can be got to accept responsibility for them. If they were to accept it, the feeling of guilt would be too great, too devastating to be borne. We can be sure that it is extremely unlikely that the Germans, at least of this generation, can ever be made to feel that each, as an individual, had a share in what was done.

These happenings of the last decade are, of course, an extreme

and, let us hope, never to be repeated example of what can happen when people refuse to take responsibility, when they give up the direction of their own lives, handing themselves over like brutalized robots to "those who know best." We can never lose sight of the fact, however, that this unwillingness to take responsibility, to steer one's own course, is right here with us—in our very homes, if we let it take root. The last thing that many people want to do is to think for themselves. Into every decision goes some calculation of what "the others will think." That is necessary enough. We are social animals, we must live together, and however tempting it may be to reach over and pick up one of those pleasantly obese rolls of bills that the teller in the bank displays in his cash drawer, you can't do that and also enjoy the advantages of a banking system.

But too many people are writing too many blank cheques on the direction of their own business. They are buying reassurance at a bankrupt price. They are buying it from the churches, from the company for which they work, from some confident, aggressive friend, from their parents or from the neighbors—"I'll do what you say, I won't do what you don't want me to do, I'll be good. In return I want you to give me approval and reassurance, and even if things don't go so well I want to be told that I was a conscientious and loyal employee whom you would have been glad to keep on if it hadn't been that the foreman's nephew had lost his own job and needed another." Or, "I don't want the neighbors to talk about me. I'll be a nice girl. I'll wait until I'm asked and never be forward. I won't let anyone get fresh with me. I'll be home early. Only if I never do get asked, I want to be told that you can't understand it and that men must be blind." These frustrated, dependent lives are there to be lived until we make up our minds to finish them. They will continue just as long as ignorance concerning human behavior continues.

Puzzlement and concern about the way in which human beings act is not, however, limited to these timid folk. For many who are bold and independent enough to do their own thinking



it is easier to understand almost anything from a gas stove to the stock market than to understand the behavior of their fellow men, or their own, for that matter.

It is not the large decisions—what kind of work to go into, whether to leave one's husband, whether to take one's life—which are puzzling and baffling. These are infrequent. Sometimes they never occur in the individual's life. When they do, often we do not actually make a decision, but stand uncertain and wavering until, overtaken by events, we are pushed into a course of action.

It is the regular business of living that leaves us confused—and the more you know of it, the less regular it seems. The income tax, the rationing system, the registering for this and that, the declaration that all men are equal, the selling of clothes and shoes by sizes, have helped to build up a belief in the existence of the average man. The average man will require 3,000 calories a day, more if he gets up and sweats with a pick and shovel, less if he sits down all day. (It is an interesting commentary on our "niceness" that sitting-down jobs should be called "white collar" rather than something more anatomically appropriate.) The "average" man marries at twenty-six, sleeps eight hours a night, and, if a husband, must contribute 2.3 children if the population is to be kept at its present level.

From this creature of the statistician we turn with relief to the fact that, however real he may be to the quiz expert, to the government, and to the bright mathematician, in actual life he disappears and in his place is an endless variety of people meeting endlessly different situations from hour to hour throughout the day.

True enough, if we step back far enough, the difficulties people meet and the ways in which they try to solve them fall into patterns. But your fellow man will not thank you if you try to understand him on the basis of his contribution to Table 47 of the current census report. Get closer and you will see how truly individual are the ways in which each of us meets the day's happenings.

There is the pretty, friendly little brunette cashier in the bank who is much more meticulous and conscientious in her work than you might anticipate. She stays late in order to check and double check her books; the other members of the staff kid her about the fluster she gets into when her balance is out a few cents. She doesn't understand it herself and wishes that she would quit being so silly about such things and take them as easily as others do. Behind her worry, her need to get things done right, the books to balance, the pile of work to be caught up before she can leave the office for the day, lies some European history. Her father was a boy in Poland when that country was undergoing one of its frequent partitions. He was brought up in the part that the Czar was trying to Russianize. Living wasn't easy; you had to be right or you might be dead. Her father survived the dangers of his early boyhood but he came to the United States afraid of life. He was afraid of any deviation from a rigidly laid out routine. You had to be in at a given time, you had to be careful about what you said, you had to watch out what friends you made, you had to save, you had to have a safe job. His children grew up in this fear of life. Some of them rebelled and said, though with some trepidation, "the old man is crazy." Others, among them the brunette cashier, felt resentful towards their father's philosophy of life but were not quite certain whether he might not after all be right. So, to be on the safe side, they adopted his viewpoint on most things.

The girl chose the relatively safe and permanent kind of employment that a bank provides. She was popular, but always careful, and on this basis was able to get along—precise, worried about many things, scrupulous to a high degree, sensitive herself and very careful of other people's feelings. Her present is clearly understandable against the background of her father's boyhood. Her future brought a frank breakdown when she fell in love with a young, rather improvident American brought up in a country where there had been no secret police, no great dangers, and no need to be unceasingly careful. Her conflict between her feelings

for the young man and her fear of breaking from her father's design of living was too severe and a series of anxiety attacks appeared which were quite inexplicable to her and to her family until this background story could be brought out and a new way of living worked out with her.

Contrast the actual facts behind this girl's exactitude, her painstaking efforts to do her job as perfectly as possible, with the way in which she was dismissed by her associates—"a fuss budget, an old maid in the making"—and you will see how little of day to day living is understood.

What is behind the story of the widow who recently related how she had asked her young son's employers to raise his salary, and then when he returned, proud of his first raise, smilingly told him that she deserved some of the credit for she had arranged it? What are the explanations of these sudden attractions and just as sudden antagonisms which spring up when strangers meet? Why has there been this enormous expansion of recreations? Why, after we have been hurt or slighted, do we turn as instinctively as a thirsty horse to water to someone with whom we can talk it out?

It is not just the startling and the dramatic, the things that get written up in the tabloids or written down on the police blotter that are confusing and puzzling. If we stop and look, wonder and ask questions, most of us have few answers to the little things that come up as numerous as the ticks of a clock from hour to hour throughout the day.

True enough, a good deal of information to answer these questions about the way in which human beings behave has now been assembled, but it is not readily available. You can much more easily get information about your income tax or yesterday's football scores than about why people act as they do.

The knowledge is there, or at least a fair beginning of it. Specially trained men have worked long years to accumulate it. Great institutions and foundations have been set up to study human behavior, but most of the new facts stay in the heads of the work-

ers and in the records of the institutes. That quick, deep stream of information from which anyone should be able to take what he wants, is at best a trickle that is slowly percolating our lives.

Contrast this with our knowledge of other aspects of human life. All up and down and back and forward through our social structure people everywhere know that the boy who has scarlet fever or smallpox must be separated from his family and his friends until he recovers. He must be treated under conditions where he cannot spread his illness to those around him. Our treatment of these conditions has been immensely successful, and it is not too much to hope that these formerly great scourges will disappear forever within a few decades.

Compare this with the public knowledge concerning the damage done by the chronically anxious person. Those who work with human personalities are well enough aware of the devastation which can be done by the intensely anxious and insecure mother. They know that the probabilities are that a considerable number of her children will show the effects of exposure to the atmosphere she creates. They know, too, that the effect will not be as temporary as the brief weeks of incapacity produced by scarlet fever, but that it will last for years, and possibly for their lives. They know that some of her daughters will grow up to be insecure women and frigid wives. They know that some of her sons will lack confidence and drive; that even if they are gifted they will tend to seek safe and permanent jobs rather than get out and take the risks of building for themselves. But outside these specially trained workers, how many know these facts? Practically no one does. There is no general public knowledge and therefore there is no public opinion upon which to set up means of preventing such people from contaminating new personalities.

Similarly, you can contrast what is known and accepted concerning tuberculosis with what is known about sadism. The worker in the office and in the factory and the parents of children now know enough about tuberculosis so that they are quite unwilling to have the person suffering from its active stages pass on

his illness through coughing and spitting. He must be separated and treated, and his illness, too, is disappearing.

But the man who gets his pleasure from inflicting pain and misery on others may dominate and devastate his home or business and no one, save those unlucky enough to be helpless in his field of influence, will raise a word of protest.

We are now reaching a point where the great cultural myths concerning sexual behavior have been broken down sufficiently so that we can get through to deal directly with syphilis and gonorrhea. With the more rapid methods of treatment, backed up by public opinion, these conditions can be forced out of human life, to our immense gain in happiness and health.

This breakdown in these ancient myths has progressed far enough to set free public support sufficiently powerful to allow a progressive and energetic public health department in a Southern city, very recently, to secure the compulsory testing of the whole population for syphilis. Two per cent of the white and thirty per cent of the colored population were found positive and were put under active treatment. At the same time, all those suffering from gonorrhea were asked to report for free treatment. This was rendered a simple and practical proposition since it was possible to state, "Penicillin kills gonorrhea in four hours."

The syphilitic will go, but what of the psychopath? Under the pressure of great necessity, and because of the powers which that necessity has given to the skilled person, he could be eliminated from the armed services—but not from public life. His chronic unreliability, his lying, untrustworthiness and social irresponsibility constitute such a hazard for his fellow soldiers that he cannot be permitted where their lives depend upon the integrity and predictability of their comrades. But he can take public office, and he does. No month goes by but his activities are exposed. For a time the papers are full of him; the law threatens to catch up with him; he gets blazing publicity. Then something else climbs into the headlines. Six months later, the public, knowing nothing of psychopathy but only that he is well-known, re-elects

him—"Mr. X, the well-known representative from Bumble-town"; "Mr. X, who has devoted himself to public life."

We could free ourselves almost overnight of things that make our hour to hour living the present awkward, clumsy, progression from one inadequately managed relationship to another throughout the day. We could free ourselves of crippling guilt feelings which make so many of us slaves to others. For example, the daughter who does not feel that she can marry because it would mean leaving her mother—who has succeeded in binding the daughter to her during the years when the child was defenseless against her endless reproaches—"You can't love your mother"; "Mother knows best"; "If you are not a good girl, mother will leave you." The mother has put a guilt ring in her daughter's nose for the rest of her life, and anyone who knows how to get his fingers on that ring will be able to lead her around at will.

We could free ourselves of those painful feelings of inadequacy which drive off so many to lead solitary lives, turn others into stiff, awkward people incapable of making their real capacities pay dividends. We could free ourselves of those endless hostilities and suspicions which make contacts between people, and particularly between competing groups, a sort of jungle warfare. Why is this? What is holding us up? The "know how" is there but it doesn't get to work.

The answer very simply is that we have not yet worked out means to stop the contagion of dangerous and harmful beliefs of the past. It has been extremely difficult, since this contagion occurs primarily in the childhood years by transmission through the parents and through those social institutions to which tradition has given a role to play in the child's early years.

In earlier generations, grandmother used to hand down to her daughter, and her daughter to the grand-daughter, such cherished possessions as the four-poster bed, the set of hard and upright chairs, the discreet commode-stand converted by the modern into cocktail cupboards. The modern city dwelling has

said a very definite "no" to this debris from the past, but as yet there is no effective screen to catch all the broken-down ideas which come slipping and sliding down from one generation to another—the old superstitions, the prejudices, the beliefs which were the best available in their day but which are now utterly unsuited for the world of today and tomorrow.

It is amazing to see how far some of these ideas have come. There are pieces of discard and rubbish from practically every system of belief whereby men have lived. You can recognize the litter from every major battle that men have fought for freedom from the old and entrenched systems. "The divine right of kings—and parents"; "You can't change human nature"; "In sin did thy mother conceive thee." There are fragments of the stupefying doctrine of predestination and many pieces still actively ticking away from that formidable apparatus of beliefs in absolute evil and absolute good which once crushed out enquiry and intellectual enterprise through all Western civilization.

Attempts are being made to meet this continuous contamination. Determined efforts are being made to establish adult education. The fact that the schools can, and must, serve as a major channel through which new ideas concerning living are transmitted is acquiring new force and potency. But the old system struggles for self-perpetuation. Hence the continuous conflict for the control of the schools; hence the dangers to which the progressive teacher is exposed; the absurd remuneration offered, so ridiculously inadequate that one could almost imagine a determination to drive the more vigorous and uncompromising from this field and leave it to those more willing to acquiesce.

The old clerical religions, the new state religions, and of those most clearly the Nazis, have struggled for control of the beliefs of people. The stakes are very great. If you can determine what a generation will think, you need have little anxiety for your regime.

Thus far this control has passed from one dominant group to

another, and each group has exploited it for its own use. Now, however, a new force is beginning to appear, namely, the sciences which are devoted to the study of human behavior. From the knowledge which they are beginning to accumulate, we can establish a progressively evolving series of beliefs, a continually maturing design of living which is immeasurably more effective than that which has come out of the fierce factional and sectional rivalries of the past centuries.

It is easier for us to see the mutilating factors at work in the beliefs of a system foreign to ourselves than in our own. We can see clearly the distortions which the Nazis have succeeded in producing in the thinking of the children of the Third Reich. We can only guess the extent to which our own social institutions are continuing to distort the thinking of each new generation by means of looking back at the beliefs from which, after a great deal of effort and the lapse of much time, we have succeeded in freeing ourselves.

Belief in the intellectual inferiority of women was so well established a few short generations ago that it was not considered worthwhile establishing any save the most rudimentary educational opportunities for such empty heads.

Belief in the talon law in dealing with criminals was all but universal up until the end of the nineteenth century. You endeavoured to inflict at least as much misery upon the wrongdoer as he had upon his victim. The concept of eliminating him by changing him is still struggling painfully for acceptance.

If we turn to issues which are current now, or will be tomorrow, we will see how much bitter resistance there is to change. It is only barely possible even to state the issues, let alone consider them dispassionately, weigh measures to deal with them and set those measures into action. Are all persons psychologically fit to be parents? Are we going to permit chronically insecure parents to continue to transmit to their children, and they to theirs through the unstable, unhealthy atmosphere they create, their proneness to guilt feelings, their overconscientiousness, their



frigidity, their conservatism? If not, how are we going to stop it?

Are we going to continue to use the sense of guilt as a means of social control? What are we going to do about those social institutions, the continued existence of which depends so largely upon the manipulation of their supporters by this weapon?

Are we going to continue to maintain that marriage is based primarily upon the sexual life, or that the other values—the pleasure of living together, the existence of joint past experiences, the interest in the children—are the major part of marriage? The imminent disappearance of some of the major hazards of the sexual life—venereal disease, the possibility of undesired pregnancy—will bring this issue before us in a very live way within the next few decades.

## CHAPTER II

### *THE PATTERN*

WHY DO MEN AND WOMEN BEHAVE AS THEY DO? SINCE TIME began this question has always left us with our heads in our hands. Those seriously inclined people who dismiss as frivolous the conjecture that Rodin's Thinker was suffering from a stomach-ache, or was indulging himself in what modern psychologists lightly call a fantasy, favor the view that he was trying to figure out some answers to this question. No doubt when that pugnaciously prognathous gentleman lived there were lists scribbled on cave walls or simply recited as part of the mumbo jumbo of the current religions—lists of answers to those curious, those exasperating, those dull, delightful, and utterly dreadful things, those all but unpredictable things that he—and she—does.

Many an excited and tremulously perspiring adolescent, many a puzzled and frustrated adult has searched the modern counterparts of those ancient lists in vain. Lists remain words, and living remains the headache and the fascinating business that it is.

The explanation is not far to seek. "The proper study of mankind is man" is a telling quotation which, brought out at the right moment, can quite pleasantly deflate some irritating arguer and set him uneasily to wonder if you have said, in rather a smart manner, that he doesn't know what he is talking about. But, until very recently, that is just about all it has amounted to—a handy "deflator."

We don't easily change our minds about ourselves. The idea that all men should have rights before the law, that they should not be imprisoned without trial before their peers, was gained only when the greater part of England got after John, King of England, Lord of Ireland, Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, and Count of Anjou, backed him up on Runnymede Island one June-morning and told him that he had better sign—or else! He signed. But John was a little lacking in wits, he got everyone mad at him at the same time. Because they were all mad with John, they accepted these new ideas about themselves.

This was an exception. The birth pangs of big new ideas have usually been a lot bloodier: witness “liberty, equality and fraternity.” Those new ideas were ushered in with only less blood than that with which the bad, old ideas of the supermen have just been ushered out. Again, the acceptance of the Bill of Rights was achieved only after shooting off a certain number of obstinate heads.

If we had as much trouble in making up our minds that automobiles were better than horses, the sparrows might be happier, but certainly a lot of us now living would not have had to stretch our gas coupons in World War II.

From this it is easy to see that no matter what the quotation said, it has been simpler and safer to study mankind in the library than in his raw reality. The study of T.N.T. or typhus are not overcrowded professions and the study of man has proved incomparably more hazardous to those who wanted to look at him as he is. He doesn't like to have his myths taken off. He is apt to react with murderous violence if you try too hard. Hence, until quite recently, it was considered better to leave him alone and study what had been written about him by others who had studied what had been written about him. Then you could engage in the bracing but safe exercise of applying large general principles, which had usually had their origin in some moral or metaphysical discussion of earlier centuries and which, by this time, had lost all their dynamite.

Violent intellectual storms have eddied around the ancient problems of free will and predestination. Doctrinaire mists of discussion as to what man ought to do drift interminably across the living scene and hide those matters of infinitely greater stature, namely, what man actually does. Bitter memories from the centuries of scarcity, from the years when our productive capacity was so perilously little above our needs that the slightest social disorganization and even natural fluctuations of climate produced want and famine, have resulted in the meaningless perpetuation of hunger and thirst in our inventory of man's motivations.

We have invented a great array of myths about why we act as we do. That, in itself, might not be so bad, but we have succeeded in getting ourselves to believe them. Half a century ago, if you got stuck trying to understand man and his ways, it was considered sound practice to go and look at the monkeys. Sometimes you could get some of the answers from watching the way in which they managed. Here is how one cynical writer figured out the rewards of believing in myths. In the primeval forest ages and ages ago there once lived a tribe of run-down and dissolute monkeys. Among them was a precocious youngster who, instead of trying to distinguish himself by being more dissolute, more run-down and dragged-out than the others, hit on the ingenious scheme of puffing himself up as far better than the rest. He was better-looking, he was more intelligent, he had a loftier nature, his descendants would subscribe to the Craze of the Hour Society and sleep on Youth Spring mattresses. He had what he called a moral outlook on the world.

The other monkeys, when they weren't infuriated by this obvious and almost unbearable nonsense, laughed at him very heartily indeed. But he kept right on saying he was different, he was better; and his descendants carried on the family tradition. This was long before we knew anything about blue blood or bad blood, Aryan blood or royal blood. The simple monkeys thought that they were all created equal and that they could only distin-

guish themselves in dissolution and general depravity by their own earnest efforts. But for generation after generation this monkey's descendants kept on repeating that they were different, they were better, they had a fine moral nature, until, after hundreds of thousands of years, the rest of the tribe suddenly awoke to the fact that these irritating creatures actually were different. This pleased the aspiring monkeys greatly—they had always known they were different but still it was a little more reassuring to have the others admit it. And so, just to be sure that there should not be any backsliding or falling down on anybody's part, they named themselves *homo sapiens* from then on.

We believe our myths all right, but certainly they are as far off as ever from squaring with the facts of human nature.

What are the great movers of men? This question is much more difficult to answer than it might seem. We have already said that man has built up a most intricate system of myths to explain himself. This is confusion enough, but it is further confounded by the fact that a number of motivations which were active awhile ago no longer operate save under quite exceptional circumstances. Hunger and thirst and fear of violent death are no longer such live realities, save in wartime. Finally, to crown the muddle, man's busy conscience has set up a number of things which it loudly asserts ought to count with him, and he, being a creature of rather frail moral courage, is apt to agree with that vociferous watchdog. Yet actually, being considerate of others, dutiful to one's parents, respectful of the law, or turning the other cheek, are things we commonly do only when we can't help ourselves. That fact, of course, by no means prevents us from attempting to get all possible credit from the situation and asserting that only creatures of such fine moral fibre as ourselves would be able to see that this was the right thing to do and do it.

It has been much easier for us to work out the reasons why almost any other kind of creature acts as it does, than the causes of our own behavior. Indeed, we made rather poor progress in understanding the animals until we gave up trying to see in the

behavior of rats and guinea pigs, birds and monkeys, the motivations which we believed to exist in ourselves. It was only when we began to look and see what they were actually doing, and gave up trying to find in their behavior what we imagined they ought to be doing, that we began to make progress.

Unfortunately, when we look at ourselves, it is exceedingly difficult to draw back and detach ourselves from the behavior which we try to understand. Our own superstitions, prejudices, and the myths with which we have grown up inevitably tend to distort and becloud what we are seeing.

Suppose, to help us in our effort, we imagine ourselves as beings from outside our planetary system, undertaking a study of living organisms in this third planet out from the sun. In a short time our attention would, no doubt, be attracted to one among the innumerable species of living creatures to be found—a rod-like organism, split halfway up the middle, with a partly pinched-off knob at the top end. We should be interested for several reasons. First, it would interest us that this organism seemed to be able to live in all parts of the planet, indicating that it had more adaptability than almost any other living organism, not excepting those very versatile travellers: the mosquito, the bedbug and the rat. Then we should note that it seemed immensely destructive. Wherever it appeared, many of the other kinds of living creatures were killed off or their life habits, and even their bodies, distorted to meet its needs.

There is the dog—though why we continue to give the same name to the astounding array of caricatures of this once reasonably natural looking creature is a caprice in itself. Can it be that by insisting that all these amazing forms are just dogs we are trying to hide from ourselves the uneasy knowledge of what we have done to this unfortunate animal? Through interfering with his natural mating we have removed his tail, hung one on him that looks like a pig's, produced another with a thump like a rope. We have taken the hair off him entirely, and we have grown it so long that you can't tell fore from aft until you pinch

him. We have pushed his nose back until his teeth hang out and he drools. We have stretched him, chest from hips, until his ribs stick out. And we have turned him into a race of hysterical sycophants, practically none of which could live a week away from man's table. But we call them all dogs.

Our handiwork upon the cow, while lacking the same virtuosity, has produced from this formerly modest creature an animal which, on manipulation, will yield four times her weight in milk a year. As for what we have done to the reproductive tract of the hen, due regard for those who care for omelettes forbids too close inquiry.

Man's urge to turn everything living or elemental to his own use is inexorable and irresistible. Wherever he has lived in numbers the very face of the earth has been changed. The countryside has become mottled with his dirty-white buildings and the air above thickened and dulled with the smoke from his innumerable factories.

These are the large, obvious things that we should see as we first stood on the earth. Later, looking more deeply into the behavior of this exceptionally potent rod-like creature, we should see that he believed in a number of things about himself that simply weren't so. Among them would be his belief that he was governed solely by what he called "reason," that he exerted a choice as to what he would do in each and every situation, and that he made the choice on the basis of what he called "bad" and "good." One would also see that, with very few exceptions, he believed that he was a quite unique creature and was at worst sketchily related to the other kinds of living things that existed on this planet.

These beliefs, almost without exception, are quite astonishing. The extra-terrestrial visitor would assuredly muse upon the amazing contradiction between the undeniable potency of this creature—so active in construction and adaptation, so terrible in destruction—and the number of things which he could believe about himself which are not only not so, but are so blatantly

and glaringly not so. The "not-so-ness" of many of his beliefs about himself would seem to the visiting observer to be so obvious that it would seem incredible that such a capable creature did not see through them.

For instance, it should surely be possible to grasp the fact that he is definitely related to other forms of living creatures. An immense number of other creatures have achieved modification of their skin whereby they can pick up certain light frequencies and see what is coming before it arrives. They have also modified other parts of the skin to pick up variations in frequencies of air waves and hear approaching friends or foes. One can trace down into very simple forms of life the same kind of internal circulating system, with its heart pump and its valves, the outgoing arteries and the returning veins. A lesser, but still vast, number reproduce themselves by the arrangement whereby one part of the species takes over the actual development of the new creature and the other undertakes the main burden of foraging and protection.

There are, of course, differences—the mere fact that this particular form has become so dominant indicates that. But there are also sweeping similarities and some of us can, at times, get around the blinkering effects of the great myths which we believe in concerning ourselves if we look at the behavior of other kinds of living creatures and attempt to understand at least some of our ways in the light of how some of these far off kindred manage things. When we do, we are at once struck by the extent to which uniformity of behavior is present, particularly among the simpler kinds of living creatures. The number of ways in which they deal with a given situation is limited, and they show only a feeble capacity to devise new ways of meeting a situation which they have not previously encountered. Their day to day behavior conforms to a pattern. As we pass up the scale we find more and more capacity to produce new ways of doing things. The capacity reaches its fullest expression in man.



But all that we have been is part of us. True enough, we have come up from our beginnings by virtue of our remarkable capacity to adapt, to adjust, to invent new ways of doing things. It has taken us a mighty long time, and with each of us there has come the age-old tendency, which we see in the ant and the wasp and the swallow, to routinize what we do. Think of the old bore who starts the same dull talk whenever he finds that "conversation" is expected of him. Look at the tiresome ritualists, who have their own precise way of doing things which cannot be altered, who go away each year at the same time to the same place to meet the same people. They differ from the herring chiefly in that their doings are rarely productive.

Pavlov devoted his life to measuring the strength of the urge to repeat what we have once done. He chose our warmest admirers, the dogs, to show how quickly behavior would solidify into an unvarying set. Ring a bell a few times before supper and the dog's mouth would water every time he heard that bell. Certainly you could break down the routine, but only by setting up another in its place.

The immensity of this pressure to routinize our behavior is something which man, by and large, has not accepted. If he does recognize it, he certainly keeps it dark.

Think back a few pages to the aspiring monkeys. There is perhaps something in that story. For we have spent an immense amount of time in doing just what they did in asserting our uniqueness, our magnificent difference from anything else in our world. It was perhaps necessary, for our beginning superiority was so little, so feeble. But to continue these myths now is needless and misleading. We have grown up and grown indifferent enough to look more directly at reality.

"I am Julie!" howls the baby. "I am I. I am unique. No other needs exist except mine for I am the center of my universe. I want what I want, regardless."

"I am Homo!" howls Early Man. "I am the Lord of Creation.

The Master of all things made me in his image. My home is the center of the Universe. And I have Reason, which sets me above the brutes."

With brief interludes he kept on howling pretty well until the Renaissance. Then the growing up business started, and, as human affairs are now reckoned, we have gone on rapidly. It is only four hundred years since Copernicus and Galileo got us to give up the idea that our earth, our precious home, was the center of the firmament. It is less than a century since Darwin drew the veil from the fact of our common origin with all other animals, and it is within our lifetime that the great number of busy social scientists have succeeded in explaining, without losing their lives, not only that we share whatever reason we have with a considerable number of other species of animals, but that reason is a tool that we ourselves use only part of the time.

We have not yet accepted the fact that an immense amount of our daily behavior, like that of all living things, is not free but bound; that it is the expression of the individual's pattern of living or of the pattern of the group to which he belongs. We have not taken into our calculations the fact that it is not only exceedingly difficult for most individuals to break away from their routine, but that to do so often enough disturbs them to the point of distraction.

What is pattern living? It is the doing of things in a given way because we have always done them that way and because it is the way that "everybody does it." We don't do it that way because it is the most effective or the most reasonable way, or even the most pleasant way, but simply because it is sanctioned.

Is there any good reason why men should go around sweatily and sloppily in the summer heat clad in a long, twin-cylinder garment and with all possible ventilation closed off by means of a strip of colored cloth tied around their necks as though they were laundry bags? There is none whatever. During the war it was perfectly possible to dress several millions of men in suits and open-necked shirts without any grave demoralization and,

unfortunately, without shaking to any noteworthy degree any of the existing social institutions. But, while it is perfectly true that men have not always dressed in coats and vests, ties and long pants, they have presented themselves to the world in this way for a long time, for much longer than the lifetime of any one of them, and, hence, what changes do come are coming very slowly.

The same thing is true of national sovereignty. Common sense would soon move us to say that competing and warring colonies of ants have much to gain from getting together and organizing mutual protection. As a matter of fact, there is hardly a sovereign state anywhere that does not in itself represent just such a getting together of competing communities and sections. But it is only now, after two of the most destructive wars and after every warning that our economic system is starting to crack up, that we are beginning to show some willingness to trade in some of our sovereign rights in return for mutual security. Why is this? Very simply, it is the steamroller pattern, clanking robot-like down the ages. Unfortunately there are no natural stopping places. We talk about new generations as though they were separate waves. They are not; they flow into each other inextricably. People die, and you might think that that was the end of some particular ingrained idea. But before they die they do their best to produce little models of themselves. They succeed, or if they don't, the little anti-models are sometimes worse. New ideas must insinuate themselves through cracks in this continuous system, or by brute force and blood-letting. We have no organized machinery for scrapping the old, the outworn, for taking dangerously antique concepts off the highways of living.

In individual lives, pattern living can be seen still more clearly, or at least what we see strikes closer home. There is the girl who can't criticize her mother, though the latter has so dominated her, has so undermined her confidence that she is unable to meet strangers, has no belief that boys will find her in any way interesting, and who cannot, in fact, trust her judgment sufficiently

to buy her own clothes. But she cannot criticize her mother; she never has; she feels that it would not be right to do so.

Pattern thinking determines the order in which we put on our clothes in the morning, it expresses itself in the appalling banalities most husbands and wives exchange in the first half hour of the new day, in the mechanical smile, in the not so mechanical scowl. So set and familiar is the pattern of behavior that most wives are able at once to detect the subtlest and best-concealed disturbances in their husbands' minds by the minute variations which these produce in their pattern of brushing their teeth, criticizing the toast, and commenting upon the behavior of their eldest sons.

So the day goes on. We go into work at a given time, whether we feel like it or not, because the pattern set by the demands of our complex society requires it. Clearly no one in his senses would claim that a highly organized business could be carried on if its workers came in only when they felt like it. This is a luxury reserved only for artists and daily domestic help. Our point is that it is not the necessity of carrying on the job that sets us once more into the morning groove, but the almost irresistible tendency to repeat a pattern once it has been established. Pavlov's dogs drooling to a bell, salmon dying in the attempt to get up a dammed-off stream to spawn, and old boys burning up because someone has taken their customary chair in the club library have more than a bit in common.

Pattern living and inventive living are in continual conflict—the measurelessly old struggled with the new from the time when we feared every creature until now when we fear none save ourselves. Each tries to take over the other. Both have their values. These values become most vivid if we can see that pattern living is a much older way of managing, and that our capacity to work things out on the basis of reasoning is something we have gained only fairly late in our history. Though it is old, the pattern system, like the British crown, is a way of managing which has been adapted to modern life. It is a time-saving device. Setting up a

pattern to cover a part of our day is like turning the plane over to the gyro pilot; we are the freer to turn our attention to other things. The great danger is that the gyro pilot may, like a robot in rebellion, turn and run us down. We may have a great deal of difficulty in pushing it out of the control seat and taking over again. True enough, it can go on performing very efficiently, perhaps more so than we could if we held the controls all the time, but it can't do anything new.

Out of pattern living cannot come anything more than a perpetuating of old ways of doing things. It is the business of the invention of reasoning to break up the old patterns and set the fragments together in new ways. One stands, or preferably lies, appalled at the amount of this kind of thinking which must have been necessary to get the age-old roller shorter and shorter until at last the first wheel wobbled uncertainly along the prehistoric cowpath. The time it has taken us to accept the fact that automobiles do not have to look like horse-carriages can supply us with a meter to measure the resistance against which logical thinking has to work. Another in the making is the momentum which keeps electric lighting looking like kerosene lamp lighting.

Why is it so difficult to get the control into our own hands and do what we want with it? What a question! Why bother? Let dear old gyro George do it. After all, how many of us are Spartans or fakirs wanting to lie on spiked beds? The business of "kicking against the pricks" is no more highly esteemed than it was.

We must be just. Not even our generous willingness to let George do it can account entirely for the dominance of pattern living. For one thing, if we gave way too completely, the other more itchy-minded fellow would get ahead and would soon be busy thinking up ways to get us working for him. Look around and see how many fellows who lead routine lives, who figure things out the way they were told, who think that good old Dad's ideas were just about right, are working for scoundrels who seem to have very little respect for the past, precious little for the pres-

ent, but a good deal for what is around the corner for tomorrow.

No, there are other and pretty potent reasons why pattern living swallows up so many of us, dulls us down, and slows us off. Let us start by saying that pattern living in our days is infested. That is not something new, but we have become more sensitive to vermin than we were in the hardy days.

In pattern living all those things that can't face the future take refuge—all those things that are due for oblivion with the next forward step. All those people who built their lives upon those things are constantly alerted for their defence. You can recognize them by their language. "Your father was a very fine man, and what was good enough for him should be good enough for you." "There are some things that just can't be discussed." "I don't know why it's wrong. I don't have to know. It's just wrong, that's all." "I'm not a narrow-minded person, but—" "I know, but it's better to play safe."

The old order has an immense dragging hold. It is not simply that great numbers who are now in positions of advantage believe, very rightly, that new ways of managing affairs might find them unable to maintain themselves, but still larger numbers suffer from such insecurity that they do not want to face any kind of change whatsoever, for fear that that change might bring something that they could not meet. The tragedy is that often their fear is perfectly groundless, and if they could undertake to alter their ways they would actually be more successful.

The reactionaries, the standpatters, have burrowed their way into and set up their defence within pattern living, but this pattern of living has in addition another form of infestation—infestation with fears.

We can see readily enough how living to a pattern is time-saving. It requires very little tiptoeing of our imagination to grasp that it can also be made to serve as one of our reassurance systems. Insecurity and anxiety are part of the price that man has had to pay in his upward climb. Some animals in a very real sense sought security first; they took refuge in immense defences of

hide and horn and size. Man is the animal that has taken a chance, has chosen mobility instead of mass, adaptability instead of the monolithic but unchangeable stature of the mastodon. He has had his reward, true enough, but he has had to pay for it, in uncertainty and in the necessity of being continually ready to work out new means of meeting the unknown.

It is not surprising that he has had to make use of a great number of reassurance systems—traditions, ceremonies, his sorcery systems and his innumerable religions. To such an inventive creature, pattern living has furnished excellent material for building yet another reassurance system. What you have done once with success is certainly something that you might do again without risking unpleasant consequences. Thus people whose anxieties, whose fears of living have become extensive, have made of this a mechanism as damaging as a drug addiction.

Crowds and crowds of us, under stress, have said to ourselves, "If I don't step on the next eight cracks in the pavement, everything will be all right at the office"; or, "If I can get to this corner before five more automobiles turn into the street, I'll get through that exam." But some people are so insecure that, having started to use this little reassurance device, they cannot let go— "If I don't get up and dress in precisely the same order as I did yesterday, things may go worse than they did"; "If I don't wash my hands, rinse them, wash them again, rinse them, wash them a third time and then run them through cold water, it may be that I will carry some contamination." This is a much more widespread anti-anxiety defence than we know. For most of us, however, it is as infrequently used as a morphia tablet. For others the pattern is much more compelling. You have to get out on the left side of the bed, you have to put on the right sock first, you have to count the letters on the billboards. You know this is foolish, you don't tell anyone about it, but if you don't do it you feel extremely anxious. Here the task master is really in the saddle and you will require expert assistance to get him out.

We are on the edge of discovering a whole new aspect of our-

selves. What we have been able to understand so far has simply been bits and fragments of the whole. It has been difficult to make headway because of the fact we have brought out earlier, namely, that we have refused till lately to see that we have anything in common with other animals, upon whose behavior we have set the hallmark of "unreasoning and instinctive."

Then, too, the bright badge of Western civilization was belief in progress. Each year would bring more and different kinds of crops, new machines, men would grow bigger, brainier, better. All these would pour out of the cornucopia of man's "reason."

After our experience with the varied lot that has come tumbling out of that cornucopia in the last half century, we are now prepared to take another look down some of the vistas that are opening up on pattern thinking. We have had all kinds of half glimpses of this unexplored country. For the very reason that the force of pattern living is so massive and so pervasive it is hard for us to see. If you stand and look on a still summer morning when the tide is making into some sea loch, you can look away across to the opposite shore and barely see a sign of the tremendous movement of water. It is only where some rock pushes up from the bottom that the sudden boiling and swirling of the water warns you of the tremendous silent power that is pouring past.

The bombing of the cities of England gave us one of our sudden glimpses into the force of pattern living. In those cities the people could bear hardships many and great, as long as there was no interference with certain fundamental things upon which they based their daily lives. But if the gas cooker was turned on and there was no gas, if the faucet in the sink was turned on and there was no water, if the corner store was a pile of rubble, then bewilderment and apathy, confusion and panic were apt to supervene. If at this point relief agencies came in, set the bombed-out people to work, organized them and gave them leadership, they rapidly recovered. A new type of pattern living was strung together.

No one, apparently, realized what the psychological effects of



wartime gas rationing would be. They were most easily seen in rural areas, but even within the cities, combined with help shortage and overcrowded public transportation, they had much the same effect, namely, immobilization. And, hardly guessed at, mobility had become a pattern of living upon which we had grown to depend.

We are now clearing the outlines of a new principle the existence of which we were unaware of, at least officially. There have always been plenty of individual prophets of the new doctrine that you must get around to keep on the beam. But, since they were suspected of being a bit on the defensive, they failed to get due credit. Now we are willing to give them an official blessing. Though we don't yet know how it works, we know that it does work. You have to get out, you have to do different things, meet different people, think different things, or you won't stay fit.

The garage mechanic, the farmer's wife, the school-teacher, (especially the latter) have got to get away to see any endurable relatives or to visit the city and find out how disappointing and expensive the opportunities are there for doing anything that you wouldn't want Aunt Rebecca to know about. They must have a chance to meet other people, if only to argue with them. They must, above all, get regularly out of earshot of their offspring.

Because this has become difficult, a great deal of wear and tear is appearing—edginess, jitteriness, scarey feelings, inability to sleep. "So stupidly sensitive that I cry over the least thing"; "Any little thing gets me so mad that I'm not fit to live with." Later this goes on, like the income tax, to more serious things—if you don't get after it in time. Go out and stay bright—science will back you up!

You can see the process of pattern living deep in the slowly unfolding drama of old age. The man comes home from work for the last time. The pattern to which he has become adapted through decades can no longer be followed. Though he may

have financial security, and though he may have the support of a family, this is often more than he can take, and complete breakdowns are quite common.

How can we put together our ideas about pattern living? It is not easy, for like all the powerful things with which we live—fire, sex, gravity—everything depends upon whether we use it or it uses us. Gravity, which keeps the tea-cup on the table and the tie hanging docilely downwards, in spite of the spinning earth's continuous attempts to whirl them off into outer space, is a tame and pleasant thing. It lines the pockets of the makers of easy-chairs and protects the modesty of the simple Highlander. Gravity, which brings the unlucky climber crashing down the face of the precipice, is going to take his life away.

Pattern living which will take over the routine tasks and which will allow us freedom from the necessity of deciding unimportant things afresh each day is a useful, timesaving servant. But pattern living grown to mastery has stopped whole cultures for centuries. It has killed innovators by the thousands on roaring altars, in smoking fires, and on the rack. It has ruined them by malice and slandered them into madness.

## CHAPTER III

### *THE THINGS WE WANT*

DO YOU WANT THE MOON? YOU WILL HAVE IT WITHIN TEN YEARS—the stars a little later. Atomic power and jet propulsion will see to that. Twentieth century physics and chemistry will soon be transporting our medieval concepts of human relationships, of ownership, of the rights of states, across space. In a very short time now we will be riding out to the planets with our aggressions and our hostilities as poorly understood and as undirected as they were when the Bourbons ruled—more potentially destructive than the power that takes us out into space.

If mundane things are what our shark-like appetites crave—clothes and washing-machines, houses and cars, radios and central heating—they will be ours in a profusion of which we have never dreamed. The productive capacity of the world has increased enormously. Where one machine hummed at work before, hundreds are now producing with multiplied rapidity and efficiency. One man is needed where ten, fifty and a hundred were needed before—or one woman—and that is a matter of significance. Where patches of Britain and a strip of the United States Atlantic seaboard were industrialized in the last century, every spot on the globe where power, raw materials and a market can be found is beginning to produce consumers' goods, durable goods, things big, small and middle-sized, in mounting profusion.

But we don't put these things at the top of the list. We want

things which are much warmer and more human—we don't read novels about washing-machines. Though sometimes we do go to see movies about bacteriological discoveries, the hero-researcher has to have a high voltage personality and a he-man physique if the picture is going to make money. His devoted assistant, oddly enough, must be a young woman who attracts the eye in the right places. What happens in the last hundred feet of the film depends upon the late Will Hays' office—scientific fact, by unanimous and enthusiastic consent, being left to the textbooks.

Suppose, before we start going over the things we really want, we clear the ground a little. This, of course, is never a business very popular with anyone, from the little boy who sees no sense (and rightly, as science now knows) in waiting to peel an apple before he sinks his teeth into it, on up. But, courage! It may not be so dull as it sounds.

Let us return to the lag in social inventions, attitudes, and beliefs. We don't want the transportation that the dwellers of the nineteenth century fixed up for themselves, we don't want their clothes, we don't want their houses (they are not old enough to give us an edge on the Fitz Jones's), we don't want their plumbing or their ventilation—personal or public. Do we want their beliefs about the way in which human beings act, their social values, their ideas of "right" and "wrong"? The answer to that is illuminating—yes and no.

Our answers about our desires for their material possessions would be just as bright and to the point if we thought about them in the same way. But when we think about tandem bicycles, bustles, and the inventions of Chick Sale, we think without guilt and without conscience.

When we think about the way people get along with each other, the kinds of family that we know, the question of who owns what and why, we almost always find that we start to use the words "right" and "wrong." Actions are good or bad, people are doing the right thing or they are doing what they shouldn't. Once something has had the label "bad" attached to it, it is

difficult to get it off. A great many people, and a considerable number of social institutions are busy seeing it does not come off. Consequently, the growth of our social concepts is greatly slowed down. The quick, easy evolution which carried us forward from one thing to the next better one in the material field is held up by the necessity of staging a knock-down, drag-out fight over practically every innovation in the way in which human beings think about themselves.

For this reason, though we no longer have much use for many of the beliefs and attitudes that nineteenth century dwellers considered every bit as good as their velocipedes, bed warmers and sub-basement kitchens, we feel we ought to. Putting it more baldly, we are afraid to admit that we don't—often scared to say so to ourselves and almost always to others (especially to our neighbors).

Let us take some of the easier beliefs and attitudes first, those that we have been able to deposit in the ash can or that are just waiting to be carried out. It is already difficult to recapture the atmosphere of the times when "little boys and little girls are to be seen and not heard," when the woman's place was in her home, when "gentlemen" were born. These are mostly gone. Others are going. Sin is not so potent a word as it was. Here, however, we begin to get a little close to the bone; there is some life in this one yet and when we begin to probe around it there are twinges. Our ever ready guilt feelings take a warning forward step. Officially, at least, there are still "sins."

Let us be quite clear. There are, and presumably will be for a long time to come, things that people do against which their community will and must band itself together. The community must do this if it is to survive. Indeed, it seems probable that the future will see the dangerous deviant pursued more rigorously and far more effectively than was the sinful man, the evil-doer of an earlier day. He will be dealt with more efficiently because we know more about his motives, about the social forces which led to his action.

The old "sin" system consisted very simply in labelling a number of things as wrong on the basis of a series of general principles enunciated at a much earlier period, but never changing the labels even when they became clearly outdated. There was no attempt to understand what led the sinner to do what he did. Questioning was warded off by the flat pronouncement that all men were just naturally sinful. Unless their struggles to control their evil natures were reinforced by punishment applied by the right people, sin would break out everywhere like the measles. Those were the days when a man was hanged for stealing a sheep, when those who went fishing on the Lord's Day were blasphemers.

Now we are in the process of shifting our values from a system based on precedent to one based on the actual welfare of people living in the here and now. Along with this is going on a difficult, bitterly opposed struggle to get rid of the old labelling business and to ask the simple questions— "How does it come about?" "How can it be changed?"

What about some of the other value-words now passing into the twilight? Readers of the novels which delighted the hearts of those earlier sturdy souls who knew nothing of the daily bath but perhaps understandably extolled the virtues of the widely opened window, will recall the frequent and portentous use of the word "respectable." The hero, if unlucky enough to come from a poor home, inevitably came from one that was respectable. The Respectable Woman was a most formidable creature. In her presence only a Respectable Man could stand in comfort, all others dropped their eyes and fiddled with their feet.

Where has she gone? What has happened to that massive, awe-inspiring figure breathing righteous indignation faintly tinged with the odor of mothballs? She is gone, and never really did exist. She was a symbol of social control through gossip. She was primarily a rural figure, for it was in village life that conformity could be most easily enforced. If you didn't do things in the way which the tradition of your village held to be the right way, you

weren't respectable. You would find yourself "included out"—a rather serious matter where existence might depend upon co-operation.

The growth of urban life, the knowledge of the great range and variety of perfectly sound and reasonable ways of doing such things as bringing up children, managing one's relations with neighbors, distributing one's time between work and recreation, figuring out the meaning of one's existence, have cut the ground from under the portly form of the Respectable Woman. Even in rural life, the old woman's tongue can't stretch as far as the jalopy can travel after dark. Though she is slowly sinking into oblivion, this figure still has some potency, her eyes can still flash, her bosom heave and her voice quiver as she utters her denunciations of those who venture to deviate from the immemorial and the outworn. She is still able to prevent us from discussing freely and honestly many things of real and living importance, she still casts her protection over the old, the silly, and what is now known to be the downright vicious. For the most part, and for most of the time, we don't believe in her, we know that she is holding up common sense, but the old lady was quite somebody and, though the uneasiness her memory can bring up is but a faint echo of that real terror it once inspired, uneasiness it is.

So much for the clearing of the ground. These are some of the things that we used to want, that used to move us and, in fading fashion, the things that we at times guiltily feel we ought to want, though in our hearts we know them to be mainly nonsense.

What are the things that are real and vital—the things that make us get up early or stay up late, depending upon their nature, the things that we will "do without" to get, that we will shove the other fellow down to grab, or will give up for someone else's benefit with a very real glow of martyrdom?

Affection, approval, prestige, deserve first place, if only because they are among the first motivations we know. Since we are clearly going to launch ourselves into talking about what the

world, our brother man and sister woman, does to us and how that makes us feel and what we are likely to do about it, let us first dispose of the question of how inheritance affects what we do. People puzzle and frustrate themselves over all kinds of questions about this. "I can't help breaking the furniture. I get my temper from my father and his father was just as bad," says a plump, active little woman who actually has inherited no such highly personal idiosyncrasy as chair busting, but who has a hearty and thorough-going identification with her dynamic dad. Few relatives accompanying a brother or a sister or a parent to the psychiatrist, even a decade ago, failed to slip back uneasily into his office to ask, with embarrassed defensiveness, "Is it hereditary?"

Nowadays, with our knowledge of the innumerable forms of transitory poor mental health, this question has lost its "butterflies in the stomach" properties. No one is any more likely to pass through life without experiencing periods of lowered mental health, for which he would benefit from advice, than he is to finish his days without a stomach-ache. The major incapacitating kinds of breakdown are not numerous. They simply look that way because they tend, or tended up until a decade ago when the new therapies began to come in, to be chronic and to accumulate. The mild transitory forms—the periods of loss of interest, of increased sensitivity, of raised tension, of suspiciousness—are exceedingly common.

Though this fear of inheritance is going, there are still tragic enough exceptions. Few are more devastating than the case of a deeply defective child born into a family of normal children where the mother cannot bring herself to have the child placed in a suitable hospital. (Incidentally, it would receive far better care there than she can give.) The more helpless, the more hopelessly inadequate the child, the more the mother will devote herself to it, getting up in the middle of the night, revamping the house to the child's needs, refusing to leave it alone, to the great loss of the other children; continual irritation is producing an



inflammation of mother love. As the children grow up the situation becomes still more serious. The teen-age girl won't bring her boy friends home, because of the not unreasonable fear that they would think they had better visit elsewhere if this is the kind of stock that her family produces.

What, actually, can we expect from the past? Will it reach ghostly fingers over our shoulders and direct and distort our thinking? Can we use it as a convenient excuse for doing what we want to do? "My father drank himself to death, my grandfather was a two-bottle man, the McGurgles have always been men to carry their liquor."

The answers are still the same, but, as our knowledge progresses, the extent to which we believe we are predetermined by inheritance seems to grow less and less. Moreover, we must remember that what is inherited is not necessarily fixed. It is true that we cannot yet do much about increasing an intelligence handicapped by inheritance, but we are at the point where we can expect, by the use of endocrine extracts, to add the proverbial cubit to the growing boy's stature. No, for our major motivations we have to search ourselves and not our ancestors' past, provocative though that may be.

Affection is extraordinarily necessary for us—from the little boys who have to be most carefully apportioned their share of their mother's greetings, her time, her presents, and even her scoldings lest they should feel slighted, up to the woman in her Indian summer who longs to return to her home country—"Families are wonderful. That's why I want to return—to feel that I am part of something. I can't be part of Joe, he is too impersonal." Joe is a good provider of everything except what this woman needs. He is as impersonal as a fence-post, corrects her English, over-rides her impulses of the day with decisions which are as logical and unsatisfying as a grammar. Need for affection loads the maudlin cries of the middle-aged man who, after two decades of head-on fighting with his equally bullheaded wife, discovers what he wants in a cafe hostess and says, "I got to think-

ing about her, how much better she would be than my wife, quieter, more passive—our children would be wonderful. I could lean on her shoulder and look into her stew-pot and wonder what she is doing now.”

For the child, affection is absolutely essential. It is the trellis up which he climbs to adult certainty and mastery of his world. Without it, his life runs vagrant, trails itself unsupported into all kinds of ugly, misshapen and unhappy forms.

Some benighted persons attempt to control their children by refusing them affection; others, lost to all pity in fierce domestic battles or wars waged within themselves against their own parents' former callousness, attempt to take revenge upon their husbands or wives or, vicariously, upon their dead parents by psychological attacks upon their own children.

The child is aware at a much earlier age than we have believed of his rejection, of the fact that he is being denied what he so vitally needs. Insecurity, anxiety, bitter hostility, inadequacy are the results.

What is to be done? Let us right off take out insurance against criticism by saying that we assuredly do not believe that that stalwart tax-bearing creature, the citizen of tomorrow, can emerge from an overprotected childhood. The process of growing up is a process of psychological weaning, and those who can't bring down their own meat and who cannot extract nourishment from the hard facts of life are likely to go no further in the future than they have in the past.

The way in which the child manages his life will give plenty of indication as to whether or not he has been deprived of what he needs. The facts are there all right, as patent as a molar cavity or a running nose; only, while we are now able to see these latter as things about which something must be done, we can't see his insecurity, his hostility, his failure to make friends, in the same way.

Why is that? Mainly because we are thinking of something else when we are looking at the aggressive little boy, the timid,

the ostentatious, the anxious. We are looking at a "bad" little boy, one that lacks spunk, or that should be given a good spanking, or one that should be told he ought to be ashamed of himself. We are still obsessed with the old junk of "natural wickedness," of unusual behavior as something that you "can help," of will-power as something which, if you are man enough to use it, will change your lifelong patterns at 11:00 A.M. on any day you care to start.

The fundamental step is to get enough people to recognize that antagonism and continual anxiety, and all the other deviations which make psychological cripples out of so many children, are not normal manifestations of the human spirit but are clear indications of an unfilled need about which something can, and should, be done. When that support has been gained, then teachers can set about developing the submerged half of their jobs, namely, that of building personalities. They have been prevented from doing this to any extent until now because of the intense struggle which has been going on between rival social institutions for control of beliefs, a struggle into which it has always been easy to draw the parents with the cry that their children would be taught all kinds of newfangled ideas by the progressive-minded teacher.

This can't go on much longer. Simple survival will see to that. For all his blind spots, man has a remarkable capacity to draw back onto the highway when he finds that he really has got one foot over the abyss. An abyss it is. For, without mincing words, we have either got to learn more about ourselves, more about getting on together, within the next few decades or we are in for far bloodier days than we have yet seen.

Parents have a most important part to play in building the child's ways and managing his relations with others. They are the first men and women that the children meet. How their relationships develop will be extremely significant for the way in which the later men and women will deal with their peers. But the child spends at least half of his waking hours in the school; the vastly

greater number of new contacts are made there, and it is there that he has to learn a quite different series of social relations from those which exist in the parent-dominated home.

Now it is time to say something which has been said many times before, but never very popularly. All people are by no means fit to be parents—not simply because they are mentally defective or because they suffer from venereal disease or tuberculosis, but because they possess personality traits which are extremely dangerous to young plastic minds.

We can recognize in our daily contacts the sadistic person, the nagging, the over-precise, the domineering, the chronically suspicious. We can protect ourselves against him because we have our own set of values, our own scale for judging people, events, our own acts; we don't have to take his, we can see over and around him, he sinks into his proper place. If he is too difficult, we fire him or we quit our job.

The child is in a very different position. He is equipped to drink in ideas, judgments, ways of acting, as a new born calf is to suck in its mother's milk—with no more, no less, discrimination. There is nothing else. There is no protection. Later on he may accept or reject, or may fall between rejecting his parents' ways and being powerless to go contrary to them, even long after he has left them or even after their death. By the time he is old enough to leave, as we leave an intolerable situation, it is too late. The damage is done in the early years before the child can do anything about it, or, indeed, realize, save through his unhappiness, that any was being done to him.

We have scrutinized our young men as to their psychological fitness to fight. Industry is weighing the personality traits of its typists, its receptionists, its salesladies. It seems almost ludicrous to say that we do not evaluate the fitness of people to be parents—to take responsibility for the development of what is the basis of all values. We don't, but we will!

While in later years lack of affection is without that ally, growth, which multiplies and remultiplies the damage which

that lack may do, yet its influence can be seen clearly in the dissatisfactions of highly industrialized areas.<sup>4</sup> The man coming from the small concern where he used to know everyone, where everyone knew him, to the vast impersonality of the ten-thousand-employee plant, feels it. The girl coming in from a closely organized rural community to the echoing anonymity of the apartment block knows it too. Hence some of the alcoholism, some of the precipitate disappearances through tenth story windows, and the instantaneous success of any spieler, whether political adventurer, sex pirate, or judgment day proclaimer who can make his listeners feel that they matter, that they are wanted.

A giant among the movers of men is prestige. It is towering up as our current obsession over equalitarianism seeks to obliterate the monetary incentive. Prestige calls out the great and the stirring, the dull and the downright silly, the brutal and the ruthless. Prestige makes it important that as King Mtéssa of Uganda you have seven thousand wives, or that as a cotton spinner in New England you should refrain from having more than one; that you should sit three places from the Ambassador, have white walled tires on your cars or an assortment of dogs that you do not need and very possibly do not like; that as a white collar worker you should have cloth towels in your washroom instead of paper ones which are much more sanitary but are the hallmark of the manual worker's washroom.

The need for prestige can lead to these stupidities and out-and-out idiocies. It can also serve the needs of social living.

The human being is born an expansionist. He wants—period. Anyone who can look at an infant without that lush sentimentality which, by tradition, seizes upon us at such times, will see him not as a half ethereal being “trailing clouds of glory,” but as having a distinct affinity to the octopus. What he wants, he wants and now. Contrary to all belief—and this is said without much hope of gaining general conviction, so deeply misled are we on the matter—many more older people die of

neglect than do infants. True it is that the infants are helpless to feed themselves, to move except vertically and internally, that they cannot even keep themselves reasonably clean, yet they are equipped with a most potent means of acquiring control of their environment—the voice. Almost anyone can with equanimity listen to the complaints and lamentations of the older person; a cynical heritage has provided us with a series of phrases which act as outs—"a faker; he's made his bed; a gold bricker." Try any of these on the next yelling infant and see how far it will get you.

The noise, as noise goes, is not great. In fact, one of the advantages of travelling by subway is that you can't hear the kid yelling in its mother's arm right next to you. But it has a quality which can only be described as compelling.

Fitted with that, you can't fail to be a success as an expansionist. Most people never again achieve so much. Hence the fairy tales of the magic ring and the wizard's wand that will get you anything you want—faint after-images conjured up to appease the little boy and little girl for the loss of that wonderful stranglehold they had on all creation. But taken away it had to be, else society could not endure. By the use of the parental hand, loss of the evening supper, denial of the favorite lollypop or the goodnight kiss, the voice is gradually brought under control. But the want goes on. In our struggles with it society has invented all kinds of ways in which the want can be bought off. If the individual will channel off his wanting in one or other of these ways, society will reward him proportionately—the wanting of affection, the wanting to direct and control (with society's good included at least as an afterthought), the want to deny oneself, the want to have things, the want to give them up.

The wanting to have prestige is one of these. It is a bargain between the individual and society which is carried out with a pretty fair amount of cheating on both sides. A company, the owner of which comes from a former enemy country, gives one of its returned employees the title and salary he had before he

entered the army but not the responsibility. The company protects itself against criticism but drives the man to a psycho-neurotic breakdown—"but that, of course, just shows the fellow had a yellow streak in him. We're in the clear. We did the right thing by him just as we always do for any of the boys when they come back." The two-timing husband, a practical psychologist of some dexterity, trusts to his wife's desire for standing with her friends not to bring his infidelities out into the open. The height of refinement is reached when the husband passes his girl friend off as his wife's best pal and insists that they go around together. The wife, amazingly enough, may still feel her prestige is worth it.

There is an endless struggle between the individual and the group for the upper hand. The individual wants as much prestige as he can get without sacrificing any more of his personal life than he can help. The group wants the maximum devotion of the individual's life to its own services before it will bestow the sweets of prestige.

In rural areas, where the group can keep close watch on the individual, the odds are on the former. The individual must conform or else. Rural gossip is a tremendously potent social control. Hence the man who sees things as they might be rather than as they are, the girl who wants to live her own life rather than her grandmother's with minor modernizations slipped in by her mother (such as being allowed to wear nail polish on her fingers but not on her toes or being permitted to whistle on Sundays), the members of the minority group out of favor at the moment, all tend to move into the anonymity of the city. Here there is a multiplicity of groups. The individual's work group, his neighborhood, family, and recreational groups, need not be the same. The rebel can always escape. Hence it is in the cities that the greatest advances and the greatest frauds come to fruition. Here, too, the dexterous individual may gain from society the choicest awards of prestige while making the least sacrifice of his personal life to the demands and standards of the group.

Prestige, as a motivating factor, penetrates into all aspects of human living. It is present in the play of children and in their mimicking of adult life. The distinction conferred by residence on certain streets, attendance at given schools, membership in adolescent societies, the asinities of sororities, are of the utmost importance to the individual. The struggles of a boy born across the tracks to gain acceptance are legendary and also true.

As is natural, prestige seeking is most active where the individual is the least secure. In the family group he is prepared to accept considerable latitude in the way in which his status is recognized by other members of the family from day to day. The reason for this is that he knows that whatever variations may occur in the attitudes of the other members of the family, his basic standing is reasonably secure.

The situation is quite different in those settings in which large numbers of relative strangers come together. Here there is great insistence on the minute aspects of status. At the Yalta Conference the foundations for the brotherhood of man were laid. But one of the Big Three had to walk around the outside of the house so that he might not reach the conference room through a more imposing door than the other two. Contrasted with this, all other illustrations sound pianissimo—the grave import of the location of the work bench, the size of the desk, the terms which the boss uses in talking to the worker and the other way round.

The importance of prestige in human behavior varies with the cultures. In German and Japanese life it is particularly great. The emphasis placed on titles, even for everyday occupations in Germany, reveals the value which it has there. In England, at least in previous years, the potency of prestige in daily life was reflected in the relatively rigid social stratification and the importance attached to forms and symbols—gloves, walking-sticks, visiting cards, accent, where you could spit, and where you picked your teeth. It was further reflected in the irrevocability with which a woman's reputation could be "lost" or a man's career "broken." At the end of the Victorian period it was ac-



cepted that a man who had lost prestige to a major degree should be forced out of his group, not simply by social ostracism but if possible by getting him to clear out of England. Such individuals were encouraged to go abroad, particularly to the "colonies" where prestige, while of importance, was not attached to the same things and where, therefore, a man might make a fresh start. Despite the nostalgia with which Kipling loaded the sighs of his lost souls, it was astounding but distinctly cheering to note how few of them, once comfortably settled "beyond the pale," seemed to want to return.

In retrospect we may draw courage by seeing how much the disrupting, rending events of the last half century have done to tear prestige away from its attachment to things which were utterly trivial and as bald of human values as a doorknob.

But this is something which we have to guard against forever. Once prestige has been attached to something or to someone, like discarded chewing-gum it sticks on long after all virtue has gone out of it. There is need of constant restatement of real values. There has to be a continual assessment of the vitality of concepts, procedures, and persons for whom prestige is claimed. The hoarding of junk is a propensity which we share with the magpies and our cousins, the monkeys.

The ancient but eternally vital declaration that the last shall be first is the modern assertion that the suppressed shall come to power. Sexual needs which our grandfathers would admit to only with utmost reluctance, and our grandmothers not at all, are now declared to be prime movers possessed of powers both prodigious and universal. One must suspect that the pendulum, which had seemed to have become frozen forever on the right, is now swinging to an extreme, both of position and of temperature, on the left.

Admittedly the situation is confused. Sexual fantasy and speculation does continually appear both in our waking hours and in our dreams. The amount of time spent upon cogitating sexual possibilities, or, in the case of the more conscience-ridden, in

endeavoring not to do so, is indeed almost incalculable. It is extremely difficult to get an honest opinion about this except under the most confidential circumstances. But a quick survey of the way in which advertisements for the sale of soap, tires, stockings, cement, Pekinese, mattresses, and cures for athlete's foot are illustrated in magazines, streetcars, subways, and billboards will leave the distinct impression that there is no doubt upon this point in the minds of that pair of hard-boiled realists—the modern manufacturer and his advertising agent. The extent to which the daily life of the individual is actually modified by sexual needs is, however, far less than one might imagine. It is claimed that many of our social activities are expressions of sexual needs—the dances we attend, the movies, and even the stodgy dinners. This theory may have an element of truth, but rarely enough to salt the dinner. For the most part they serve other ends to a much greater extent. We can easily be misled as to the importance of sexual needs as motivating factors.

There has been far less advance in our thinking concerning the sexual life than one might think from both scientific and lay discussion. It is true that a certain degree of intellectual freedom has been won and that these matters can be, and are, discussed as they could not be a generation ago. But many of the old prohibitions remain. Virginity is still an asset to be held on to and capitalized upon after marriage. The girl pregnant without a ring still has a pretty rough passage. At this point one may raise the question whether the tremendous disproportion between preoccupation and action may not be ascribed in large measure to the fact that barriers do exist to the free expression of sexual needs. One is reminded of the great concern for food reported by shipwrecked sailors, their constant fantasies and discussions of appetizing meals. After their starvation is a thing of the past, their concern over food sinks to normal proportions. It is reasonable to think that, as progress is made in abolishing venereal disease and in controlling conception, our mores will be modified to permit greater sexual expression. It is also to be expected that

the amount of time spent in preoccupation with sexual fantasies will be greatly reduced and we shall then see that, like hunger and thirst, sexual demands will assume rather low motivational potency or, perhaps better expressed, that once they can be met they will cause less preoccupation and less concern.

In considering this statement it is extremely important that we do not confuse the motivating power of actual sexual needs with the immensely greater powers exerted by our feelings of guilt concerning our sexual fantasies and desires. These latter, which are considered in the section on guilt, are truly distorting and disorganizing.

The changes going on in our sexual customs, and the obstructions to these changes put up by outworn prejudices and pruderies, have produced a ludicrous confusion. There is no doubt that the task of picking one's way is far more difficult now than it was in grandfather's day when there was a reasonable unanimity of opinion. Now as you walk down Main Street you will meet every opinion and climate, you will say "hello" to those who knew nothing until their husbands broke the news on the wedding night, and much the same thing to those who have been busily and happily exploring such relations with their fellow mortals since their voices broke or they began to wear short dresses.

There is the eighteen-year-old girl, charming, intelligent, coming from a gifted and wealthy home, attending her freshman course in the university who says, "Doctor, the last time I was here we were trying to trace my sexual development. Well, I can tell you the day when I first found out how babies came. It was yesterday. My room-mates were talking and I discovered that I had been wrong all along. I had always thought that they came through that little button on my tummy." There is the strictly brought up young man who, with the greatest self-criticism, persuades his girl friend further and further until they have sexual relations. From the next morning on he has no use for her.

These people caught in the transition are unhappy, confused, frustrated. Those who have never doubted the older concepts ap-

pear fairly content. Likewise one sees many others who have worked out their own standards and have found, in sexual relationships outside marriage, happiness and a wealth of human understanding which has enriched and broadened their lives.

No other part of man's varied, vociferous, lusty life more hotly and loudly demands the invention and the setting up of two social mechanisms which we are as yet lacking. The first is one for the scrapping of old, outworn, dangerous concepts; the second (which must be geared in with the first) is one which will allow for the controlled introduction of new social discoveries, of new models of sexual living, of new ways of managing aggressions, of new designs for living. When the old lasts too long and the new breaks in flood-like, the results are as here in our sexual life, a welter of confused and stormy waters in which many of us go down.

Sexual needs are powerful forces. Let us make no mistake about it. Enough misrepresentation and obscuring of this fact took place in the nineteenth century to make us forever wary. The proportions of the need can be measured in a simple statement. The continuance of the species depends on the satisfaction of sexual needs. Our sexual relationships represent the most complete form which our immense need for receiving and giving affection can take. Hence the demand is compelling.

How can we reconcile this with the earlier statement that the influence of sexual needs upon daily life is less than is commonly believed? On these grounds; first, that to which reference has already been made, namely, the extent to which sexual expression is still fenced around with prohibitions. This makes for the enormous and time-consuming preoccupation with sexual fantasy and speculation, but not for decisions and actions based on sexual need. Second, that the nature of sexual need lends itself to partial satisfaction by means which fall short of those which are prohibited. These means comprise a great series which runs all the way from fully socially accepted activities, such as dances or going to the movies with the boy friend, to activities which are

frowned upon and are actually prohibited by our cultural myths, but which the individual can evade without much risk of discovery or consequence, such as masturbation. These partial satisfactions of sexual needs succeed in reducing the urgency. Together with the prohibitions to which reference was made above, they serve to explain the fact that relatively few of our day to day actions are explicable upon the basis of sexual needs. Very many more are the result of our feeling of guilt concerning sexual matters, whether fact or fantasy.

Our culture is in midpassage with respect to sexual living. The old denial of sexual desires and needs is almost gone. The patterns which will permit free sexual expression and yet safeguard other basic human values have not yet been worked out. Later cultures will undoubtedly look back on ours as one conspicuous for the amount of time wasted upon abortive, fruitless sexual speculation and fantasy.

## CHAPTER IV

### *ANXIETY*

ANXIETY IS A TRICKY BUSINESS. IT IS TRICKY TO DEAL WITH WHEN we get up and start out on our quavering "Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen—"; tricky to recognize in the innumerable forms in which it shows up in hospitals, in out-patient departments and in clinics, in legislation and public opinion, in social institutions, in conservatism, in aggression, and frigidity, and punctiliousness. It is tricky to write about comprehensively without pressing it out of shape so that either its universality, its abnormalities, its social implications, or its values for our survival stand out with deceiving prominence.

Let us say that anxiety is one of the chief reasons why human beings—restless, assertive, dynamic, potentially destructive beyond all other living creatures—do not destroy their own species past all remedy, as they have done many others. Anxiety is one of the most powerful of the checks which have been built into our nature.

The simplest of these curbs is pain. We know well enough that pain, though unpleasant, is useful. It focuses our attention on what is damaging us right at the present moment. We throw away the lighted match, tell the dentist in no uncertain terms to go easy, or hurry to see the doctor about that unpleasantness in our tummies whether it is our appendix, our over-indulgence in green cucumbers, or our Junior-about-to-be.

The fact that anxiety acts in much the same way to influence action is not so well understood. Yet so it does. Both pain and anxiety are alarm systems. Pain draws our attention to what is going wrong on the spot, and, for the most part, to the spot. Anxiety draws our attention to what may be about to go wrong.

This simple fact has become obscured for many people because our thinking about anxiety has tended to be moralistic. Our immediate reaction to the whole question of anxiety has been in terms of "good" or "bad." For the most part, anxiety has been designated as "bad." Because of this, we encounter ridiculous assertions that so-and-so is "utterly without fear," that he remains without a trace of anxiety in situations in which his imminent destruction is threatened. Such prodigies are every bit as common as legless racehorses.

Anxiety is just as much a part of ourselves as our skins. Its attempted denial has added greatly to our difficulties. For, since we all feel anxiety and yet this cultural myth asserts that it is "bad," "cowardly," "the sign of the weakling" to feel it, those who have accepted this myth will feel the more inadequate and the more self-distrustful when anxiety begins to shake them in the face of danger.

Peterson "Piledriver" Walter, head of a large aeroplane factory, had driven himself during the early desperate struggle to catch up with German production to the limits of his capacity and beyond. His tension rose month by month. His concentration slumped, he could not sleep, he lost weight and, finally, with the mounting pressure, anxiety appeared and he found himself struggling with a severe anxiety state. His recovery was materially delayed by two things—by his unawareness of the fact that anxiety was thoroughly normal and by no means disgraceful, and by that very drive and determination of his which had carried his company to an outstanding performance. One of the manifestations of his anxiety state was that he could not go out-of-doors alone without suffering from a severe attack. As he gradually improved under treatment this fact caused him the

greatest self criticism. He said that he must be "no good," that he must have a yellow streak in him somewhere. He would make up his mind that no matter what happened he would get out of that door and go around the block alone. Naturally he couldn't. Back he would come palpitating with anxiety after having pushed himself along for a few yards. Next morning he would show up, altogether dispirited by his failure and having lost the confidence that his progress had begun to give him. It was only after he was able to see his anxiety as a problem to be dealt with in just the same way that he had dealt so successfully with his problems of production that he was able to manage himself efficiently and to make steady headway towards ultimate recovery.

It is clear, of course, that it is necessary to get the individual to carry on in certain situations in spite of his growing anxiety. Sometimes the needs of the group, never more urgent than in times of war, demand that the individual advance even to his own death in spite of the rising clangor of his alarm system.

This moralistic myth that the "brave" man doesn't feel anxiety or fear is simply a clumsy way of attempting to prevent the individual from yielding to the insistence of his alarm system. It is clumsy; one of the stupid, primitive devices which was ready for the scrap heap when we began to tire of wigs and back scratchers. It is a vicious old device for it adds to a burden already large enough to stagger the man, a load of guilt. His friends and enemies join forces in telling him "there is nothing wrong with you, you're just scared," "you can snap out of it if you've got guts." Just as reasonably you might say, "there's nothing wrong with you except a broken leg. If you were half a man you'd snap it together and be out playing golf this afternoon." It stops people from coming for treatment—at least to the right places. Hence the number of people going around with pills in their pockets and with their abdomens decorated with surgical scars through which quite unoffending organs have been removed. It is possible to admit that you have indigestion, but not that you have a



sinking feeling in the pit of your stomach due to anxiety. It is possible to admit that you might have a gastric ulcer, but not that you will up-chuck when you think of going down to straighten out the tangle at the office or starting out to face the ninety-seventh day of checking over seven thousand small parts for flaws.

It can stop you from coming for any treatment at all. A young widow whose lifelong insecurity had been blown up by the death of her husband into a real anxiety state, and whose consequent excessive concern and demands for affection were alienating her boy, said, "I may have my worries, but thank God I have not let myself go to pieces like Bill." Her brother, Bill, had let himself go to pieces to the extent that he had set about the business of mastering his troubles through advice and treatment. But the widow, feeling that anxiety was "wrong," wouldn't let herself do anything about it and she and her boy were destined to break up their home a few weeks later.

The pressures and urgencies of World War II began to force this ancient myth concerning anxieties off our backs. Considerable pains were taken in all scientifically advanced countries to see that the men in the fighting forces, in the merchant marine, and, unfortunately to a much lesser extent in the civilian population, understood what anxiety was—that it was common to all, that it was useful, that it could usually be managed and, above all, that it was not disgraceful, not an evidence of weakness or cowardice. It was an amazing commentary upon credulity how many people seemed to be unaware of the fact that when they were anxious their hearts might beat faster without meaning that they had heart disease, that they might feel weak and occasionally faint without being the victims of some obscure disease which the doctors failed to understand.

Making anxiety understandable, and at the same time respectable, was a great step forward. The fighting man at last knew that his anxiety was something that he shared with his comrades and with all brave men before him who had met and overcome

danger. He knew that in every remote part of himself preparations were being hurried forward for his conversion into a more effective working and fighting organism. And, freed from the old moralistic burden of guilt and self-distrust, he was a more effective worker and fighter.

Now that the war is over we are in some danger of finding that the foolish and noxious old myth will settle itself more firmly on our backs again. Time-dishonored myths, beliefs, and traditions, if only half pulled up, have an astonishing tendency to grow back again. There is still a pretender to the throne of France; slavery came back to Europe in 1942; cannibalism, so long rejected that it was treated almost as a joke, seems to have reappeared, if only exceptionally and spasmodically, during World War II.

If we are going to root out old beliefs finally and completely, we have got to work at the job and keep working at it. Why shouldn't the schools undertake the job of teaching the facts of living through the whole curriculum? Lectures on living are at least as fundamental to the business of being a citizen as some of the things that are given a place. Why should the child have to pick up here, there, and everywhere all the age-old misinformation, worn out beliefs, and decaying concepts concerning what motivates people, what brings them together, what breaks them down, what makes for stable families, the facts of fear and stress, of guilt, of recreation, and of hostility.

Anxiety is an alarm system. Like any other alarm system it can develop defects. It may sound off too frequently, for too long periods, or at the wrong time. In other words, people can, and in remarkably considerable numbers do, develop states of acute or chronically increased anxiety. These states are being discovered more frequently with almost every passing year. Of course people want to know "if mental ill health is increasing." The answer is that no one can tell because we paid so little attention to it until the turn of the century that we have no fixed basis for

comparison. At least we can say that even yet we do not fully grasp the range of the problem, and, as we discover more and more of it, naturally it will seem to be getting bigger.

We can say, moreover, that the anxiety states arise clearly from stress, from conflict, from insecurity, that these are almost the identifying words of our times, and that they seem even more likely to label it for the next few decades. Hence we can anticipate that, unless we do something about it, anxiety states will probably show a true rise in frequency.

They are frequent enough now. There are very few people who do not know someone who suffers from a chronic anxiety state, who constantly feels tense and tightened up, who worries about things that he used to take in his stride, who is barely able to hold on to his job because he can't stand sustained effort, can't concentrate, can't make decisions. Along with this may go any combination of multitude of symptoms—fast beating of the heart, headaches, coldness of the hands, dizziness, and a great variety of upsets of the digestive system—all against a background of chronic anxiety and fear.

It is no wonder that, having ignored the psychological side of our natures for so long, these states, which one can now recognize almost as soon as their unhappy possessors enter the room, should have been confusing and perplexing. They were treated, and still are to far too great an extent, by everything in the book; in part, at least, because they may take the pattern of almost everything in the book; in part, unfortunately, because while medical education has now almost everywhere caught up and the new men treat the patient rather than the textbook disease, there is still a pretty fair number who won't be able to rearrange their thinking this side Lethe.

For instance, there was the young wife whose worries about her husband's doings and misdoings resulted in an anxiety state which expressed itself in part by a tightening up of her throat. She, not unnaturally, consulted a throat and nose specialist, and

he was at least wise enough to do nothing radical. He would give her a throat spray and, much more important, a sympathetic ear. So she came along on a spray and an ear with fair comfort. Unfortunately her husband ran his car into the ditch under the most embarrassing circumstances, and her throat tightened up at once. Still more unfortunately her nose and throat specialist was away on his summer vacation. Greatly worried, she went to a neighboring city to consult another specialist of some note in the same line. He was a man of sterner metal. After a quick glance into her throat he said, "Mrs. Smith, your trouble is that your uvula is too long. It hangs down too far. We must amputate a piece." Mrs. Smith, who in any case found it difficult to make decisions, said that she didn't know—"should she, they—?" The specialist replied, "I am a busy man; yes or no, cut or not?" "Well, you're the doctor," replied the tremulous lady, so, with a snip-snap, the uvula met the fate of little Suck-a-Thumb. For a few days, reassured by this dynamic master of human woes and weaknesses, she felt better. Then back came her symptoms, barely modified. She went over to see him again. Once more the quick, all-embracing gaze into her mouth and again the rapid decision, vibrant with certainty—"There's your trouble. We shortened the uvula all right but we did not taper it enough." Two more snips and it was done. Three weeks later the patient, much worse, sought advice elsewhere but without much avail, for, unfortunately, treating the human being who has got something wrong isn't like working a sum out on a slate. If the sum is wrong you can rub out what you did and start again, but whatever you do to the patient changes your problem, and to treat someone suffering from a nervous condition in the way that nineteenth century physical diseases were treated is to make it exceedingly hard ever to treat him adequately again.

"Hope deferred maketh the heart sick." And the person who has struggled too long with an anxiety state is most truly sick at heart. Courage is essential to cure. That word "courage" is to be

used with a good deal of caution, because it is one of the "good/bad" words that befuddle our thinking. But, whether you talk of courage or morale or motivation, it is, nonetheless, true that anxiety has yet another cousinship to pain.

Too much pain for too long means you won't try. Go up to the orthopedic department of any big general hospital and you will see some people who have been hurt too often. They won't face the daily repeated pain of the stretching, bending, and twisting exercises that are necessary to straighten out their sciatica-contracted legs, their burn-warped arms, or their arthritis-twisted backs.

The same is true of people who have experienced too much anxiety too often. Ultimately they want to protect themselves against any more, at any cost. They won't fight to get around the block alone, they won't make themselves stay in the streetcar despite their rising panic, they won't go back even to visit the bank, the assembly room, or the office where they first broke down. Often enough they will hardly undertake any treatment at all, certainly no treatment that is going to alter their routine in any appreciable manner. In routine is safety; you know that you did that yesterday and all the days before and things were all right. The new thing might be too much for you; it might rouse up the old anxiety again.

This is the kind of thing that gets under the skin of the family and friends. Quite apart from the uselessness of talking about these problems in terms of blame and censure, it is a healthy corrective to ask oneself, or, perhaps with more gusto, the fellow next to you, just how often he thinks he would have to be paralyzed with fright before he would begin to lose his fine enthusiasm to do things. The Nazis have some well documented answers to that question. Their concentration camps held the pick of the anti-Nazi Germans. Among those who are still alive there do not seem to be very many pressing forward to assume the new political leadership.

To understand anxiety, and particularly to understand it in modern society, you have to start from something that isn't anxiety at all. After all, an egg isn't a hen.

Tension is a generally misunderstood word. We usually mean the unpleasant feelings we experience when we go to hear about that traffic ticket, when we hang around those echoing halls waiting to get into the examination, or when we have eaten too much rhubarb and are far from home. Actually, it is something that is with us all the time—like steam in a boiler. When it is very low, as when we are asleep, we don't do very much unless we start to grind our teeth, walk, talk, or otherwise busy ourselves—then it rises. When we wake up, however, the tensional level goes up until it reaches its optimum working level. Every little extra effort, adjustment, and change brings its momentary rise—meeting a stranger, getting to the place where the author thinks that he has written his royalties-worth and is going to let you discover who the murderer is, walking up to take an honored seat in the back row of the platform party. By far the greater number of these changes in tension go unnoticed. When evening comes the tensional level gradually falls and, for most people, the next day starts from scratch.

But where the level has been kept too high for too long—where the senior bank clerk has to keep the work of too many substitute employees up to hair-trigger level for too long, where the woman has had to put in too many days pasting the bottoms in 18,000 paper bags, where the son has been kept insecure and uncertain for too long by continual criticisms—there is a carry-over and the level does not go down.

There is a mounting tension—we have all felt it. There is difficulty in relaxing; there is that unpleasant conviction that comes to all of us, when we prepare for a serious examination, that we cannot grasp things as quickly as formerly nor remember so well; there is that feeling of doubt as to whether it was such a good idea to go into engineering or medicine; there is that increased sensitivity.

As the tension rises further, some of us go off our eating, others can't think of anything but the job on hand. Eventually, when the level of tension rises high enough, we begin to feel anxiety, just as the poker, when it passes a certain critical temperature, begins to grow red.

This is a critical point in more ways than one. If we can get out from under, get rid of the load, get away from whatever is causing the tension, the level usually will go down within a few days or a week or so. If we don't, we can look forward to making deductions from our income tax for medical care. There are a lot of things, like snowballs, sneezes, and fruity gossip which, once started, go on regardless, and anxiety states are among these. Unfortunately, it is just those people to whom a somewhat cynical world gives a pat on the back—the conscientious, the precise, the meticulous—who are particularly likely to press on. Things must be done, they have to be right, the schedule must be kept up and so it is, until the bookkeeper, the foreman, and the cashier can't concentrate to read Dick Tracy let alone a ledger, can't sit through the movies, can't get on a bus without nightmare fears.

These tremendously prevalent tensional-anxiety states have other causes, but none do more damage than those which can be summed up in the phrase "too much for too long."

This can be expressed in all the endless patterns of living—too much danger of death for too long was what caught up with the paratroop leader who went to pieces after his twenty-third landing behind enemy lines; it caught up with the deck-hand on the ammunition ship who had made repeated crossings of the Atlantic and then had his boat fired upon by mistake by an Allied destroyer as it was entering the Channel.

From the bright and bitter dangers of the sea and air to the termite-like mortifications and frustrations of the apartment block in Suburbia is too far for most male imaginations, but not for women's. They know. They can understand well enough that you can stand just so much—that large families were just fine when you had them out on the prairie where the sun and the air

and the distance seemed to sober the little so-and-so's, but that when you live in the city, if you can't get away from them from time to time you are certainly going to get into a state of mind just as surely as the paratrooper and the deck-hand. They can understand what it means to try to run a nineteenth-century plumbing, heating, feeding, and sleeping outfit in a twentieth-century world. Those husbands who can be induced to make an imaginative trip might try thinking about how it would be to try to keep up with your competitors if, after driving to the office in a fringe-topped surrey or one of young Mr. Ford's earliest productions—the kind with the steering handle and the bicycle wheels—you got to your cozy office, lit by those blue gas-jets and warmed at one end by an open coal fire. There you would find the goose quills scratching away busily and, sitting in your secretary's office, a dreary fat-faced young man with a look of conscious rectitude.

Most lived-in houses, and even some of the new ones, are just about that much out of date. They are simply rat holes down which endless women are pouring far from endless energy every day. They are just too dirty, too noisy, too hot in summer, too cold in winter. There is too far to walk, they let in too little light, and they don't keep out the neighbors. These things, the endless demands of the children, the endless dissatisfactions of trying to make an inefficient house run properly can, do, and did produce tensional anxiety states in a great number of women, especially when the war made everything slower, more time consuming, and more harassing, and (this is far more important than we recognized) when it immobilized people—when it meant that you couldn't get into the car and get away, when you couldn't take a train trip on an afternoon to see Aunt Susie, when you couldn't even get out in the evening to be titillated by proxy at the movie.

The hazards of the sky and the open seas certainly are more spectacular. But there is a lot in the story of the old traveller whose stay-at-home friends told him that at his age he shouldn't be taking risks voyaging around in drafty ships, on camels and the like. His reply was, "It's you fellows who are taking the risks.



The most dangerous places of all are beds—most of my friends have died in them.”

The home has plenty of other dangers. Too much father, too much mother for too long are responsible for some things neither father nor mother will admit to. Here are two new ideas—“social contagion” and “the anxiety families.”

Anxiety, insecurity, distrust of life, the attempt to protect ourselves against the dangers of living by our preciseness, by excessive conscientiousness, by being endlessly careful, by not saying what we think, by being eternally concerned about what the other fellow will think, can be transmitted from one person to another just as surely as a running nose, sore throat, or diarrhea. This is particularly true where the person is your mother or your father and you are at an age when people haven't yet given up telling you it isn't nice to put peas on your fork with your fingers. It is a real contagion—it passes from one person to another along the bands of closest social contact.

At that tender age damage is done which, at this time when our therapeutic measures are still somewhat elementary, may be all but irreparable. The brunette cashier whom we talked about in the first chapter is just one figure in a chain which seems to stretch as far up the generations as we can see. The insecure, fearful, frigid mother brings her daughters up to be over-careful, to fear living, to seek security and protection—“I'd rather be right than be anything”; “we've got to be sure, whatever happens.” These over-precise, conscientious, guilt-ridden persons are extremely prone to poor health. We know, of course, that they are especially likely to develop crippling anxiety states if put under pressure. We know pretty finally that they are especially apt to develop gastric ulcers; we suspect that they may be likely to suffer from high blood pressure; and there are a great many other conditions—some of the skin diseases, asthma, some kinds of heart disease—which seem to occur with undue frequency in those tense, sensitive, worrying people.

These are the children of this generation's “anxiety families”

and they will be the parents of the next, for they will transmit to at least some of their children those selfsame traits.

We do not yet know how far down or how far up the generations we can trace them. One "anxiety family" was found to go six generations back to the time when the family was one of the United Empire Loyalists and escaped with great danger and hardship to Canada. The anxiety symptoms seem to have appeared in consequence of these experiences, but, though the family as a whole never again experienced such threats to its existence, anxiety, insecurity, frigidity, and the need for protection went on being transmitted to the present time.

That flight across the border is the exemplar of the catastrophic experience, the happening so overwhelmingly terrifying, so shattering that alone it is capable of setting up an anxiety state which may last for months or years or may, as was just described, get into the family as it were, and be transmitted on down. Tough, resilient, everlastingly on the come-back though he is, man has seen plenty of these catastrophes in the last little while—the housewife trapped under the ruins of her own bomb-blasted house, the seaman struggling through blazing oil, the instantaneous conversion of the man beside you into something not to be seen even in the dissecting room or the local slaughterhouse.

The alarm system rings wild with the frantic, panicky overload and, strained beyond all bearing, will no longer function in its former smooth-graded manner. Everything that makes it ring, and especially those things which have even the remotest relation to the terrifying experience, will awaken the same uncontrollable outburst of fear.

In the first World War we did not know how to deal with this. We looked at the racing heart, and grave cardiologists, with care and futility, treated what they termed with revealing uncertainty, "Disordered Heart's Action." Or we looked at the nausea, the vomiting, and even the trembling, but not at the trembling

man and treated each symptom upon which we focused our attention with assiduity and conspicuous non-success.

There is no more meaty page to read than that which deals with our inability to see the anxiety states for what they are. Nothing, not even politics, witchcraft, or being in love can better show how the nature of our basic beliefs will completely alter our comprehension of what we have right under our noses.

Fortunately, whatever our basic misconceptions now are, they at least allow us to deal much more successfully with the effect of the catastrophic incident. If we can get to the person early—literally within minutes or hours—, stop the alarm reaction temporarily by sedation, and then release it slowly under controlled circumstances, we usually can protect the man against future disturbances. Those trapped in the Cocoanut Grove fire in Boston who lost consciousness early and stayed unconscious for over an hour seemed to have suffered much less psychological damage than did those who remained conscious all through the struggle to get out of the jammed exits.

This looks like one of the brighter discoveries. There seems no reason why we should not be able to make use of this concept of the emergency treatment of psychic trauma in civilian life. There is certainly no lack of major or minor catastrophies in daily life. There was the young man building the new army depot against time in freezing weather. Dizzy from the fumes poured out by several hundred salamanders used to keep the place warm, he staggered with his mate's assistance over to the first aid station where he was told in lugubrious tones, "You're gassed. Too bad. If I had a pulmotor here I could get you round." His heart now really racing, he was rushed to his old time family physician. The latter in his interne days had talked of having four gall bladders, two perforations and a ruptured appendix on this side of the ward and a series of elective hernias on the other. For years he had been quite accustomed to think of Miss Snooks, the third grade teacher, as a pair of recalcitrant ovaries and to

consider the mayor, an irritable bladder. Hence it was only to be expected that he would see the fast beating heart but not the scared young man that surrounded it. "Hmm," said he, "heart damage from gas; poisoned, I'd say; only hope is to stay absolutely at rest for six months, any extra effort might be fatal." A year later, when the exasperated insurance agent finally got the man to go through a series of check-ups in the hospital, there wasn't much that could be done. He was afraid of every minute to minute shift of pace of his heart, a bubble of gas from a bottle of coke could make him tighten up in apprehension, a neuralgia twinge across his chest was "it."

These catastrophes are occurring all the time, some out in the open, some hidden like that which overtook the eleven year old girl who went to stay overnight with her girl friend. Late at night the latter's father came into the room where she and her friend were sleeping. He forced her to have sexual relations with him and then, terrified of what he had done, crept back again to whisper that if she said anything to her parents he would kill them and then he would come and kill her. She never told anyone until her anxiety symptoms brought her to the doctor seven years later. Even then he was able to bring out the story only when the resistance which her intense apprehension had built up could be set aside by means of an injection of sodium amytal. Her whole psychosexual development had been warped; she was an attractive-looking girl who had plenty to say, even to boys as long as they remained at arms' length, but just to go dancing, to have a boy hold her hand, or to be alone anywhere with a man was enough to set her alarm system ringing in panic.

The train wrecks, car accidents, the sudden death of people you care for, the sudden knowledge that you have been found out, or that you have found out that someone you trusted was quite different can all be starting points for crippling anxiety states. If an inflamed appendix, pneumonia, or a hernia that won't go back where it belongs again are treated, and very rightly, as emergencies, why cannot these? True enough, if your appendix,

your pneumonia or your strangulated hernia are not treated quickly, you won't have to bother about things much longer. But there are very few chronic anxiety neurotics who haven't hoped that morning wouldn't come, and there is no doubt whatsoever that, as sources of social contagion, they do damage to others over the years which cannot be calculated.

Just as in the case of syphilis, tuberculosis and nutritional diseases, we have the tools but we haven't yet got the public opinion that will put them to use. You will search far before you will find a general hospital that has an emergency psychiatric service to deal with people who come in shocked and panic stricken from some personal disaster which has just overtaken them; there are few enough of those people, frantically trying to put out of their minds the shattering event, who think they should be able to get the assistance which was available to men shocked in battle.

Anxiety isn't simply an individual affair. It's not just the business of your wishing to Pete that you were somewhere else, of the next fellow being unable to ride in the elevator or stand getting into arguments, or of Mrs. Jane Doe down the street being fussy, finicky, and frigid to the point where her husband takes to coming home late and tired. It is a social force in the sense that education, transportation, democracy, and authoritarianism are social forces. It is responsible for some of our social customs and leaves its imprint on many more.

In trying to estimate its prevalence and the question of whether it is waxing or waning—all-absorbing to a generation which is just beginning to get the feel of manipulating affairs and forces on a large scale—we come up against a difficulty. It stems from ourselves. We have been so accustomed till very recently to think of anxiety as something which is related to such things as an impending visitation from the Inquisition, the Indians, Mrs. Grundy, or the Income Tax Collector that we have quite failed to see the immense amount of anxiety which arises in consequence of too much tension for too long at work or at home, or

from difficulty in adjusting to a design of living which has changed more in the last three generations than in the preceding six centuries.

It is true that the bears and the snakes and the wolves (with bushy tails) have disappeared from the daily domestic calculations of the inhabitants of Brooklyn and Montreal. We may fuss when the wall thermometer drops below sixty-five, but we won't freeze to death. We may diet, but we needn't fear starving save when the appalling forces of hostility burst out to wreck us and our works. Hence we are, perhaps, inclined to underestimate the growth of anxiety. Actually social anxiety has moved up to take its place with hostility, authoritarianism, and the new economic designs as musts for solution.

The issue can be put in a nutshell. The tap root of reaction is anxiety—personal anxiety, social anxiety. Whole groups are partially or completely immobilized with respect to social change because of their fears that change may bring danger. Revolutions of the Right and Left spring from those who have nothing to lose or who are in revolt against a progressive government which threatens to take away things from people who have no confidence that they can re-establish themselves.

The persistence of conservatism and reaction into this phase of the historic process is serious. The amazingly successful application of the scientific method to other aspects of living has resulted in an enormous acceleration in the speed of social change. The persistence at many levels in our social order of conservatism represents a danger, the extent of which is still unrealized. Change too long resisted has written some of the bloodiest pages in history.

We have to set about defining the various sources of anxiety in our social structure and clearing them up. There has been a lot of lively talk about organizing research, about looking over the field of knowledge, spotting the gaps—of which there are plenty—and starting to fill them in.

Here is a top priority starting place. We want a range of social

inventions which call for men having not only quite varied skills and techniques but also quite outstanding powers of constructive imagination. We need a scrapping system to deal with worn out concepts which continue to be transmitted, mainly through social institutions self-interested in their perpetuation. We need devices for the orderly introduction of new ways of doing things to replace the present pell-mell, haphazard entry without regard to timing and without regard to whether the old machinery has been, or can be, removed in short order.

We need methods of dealing with "social contagion." These should not be too hard to work out, for some of the general principles have already been shaped in our successful wars with the micro-organisms during the last half century.

We need techniques to deal with the "anxiety families," with the psychologically "dangerous trades," the repetitious speeded-up, meaningless operations, with those jobs which put an extremely limited range of the capacities of the individual into action at high tension over prolonged periods, such as checking over one part for flaws on an assembly line, or certain kinds of switchboard work. We need to put into practical operation the knowledge which we have gained during the war about the emergency therapy of psychic trauma. It has to be given the same ranking as transfusions, resuscitations, and emergency operations.

If we can tie New York to Los Angeles with pieces of wire in order to say good-bye, expedite movie contracts, sell fish, and give the latest news about Uncle Bill, why can't we start in on these other jobs?

## CHAPTER V

### *GUILT*

FROM THAT EVENING WHEN ADAM AND EVE SHOOK IN THE MYTHOLOGICAL bushes until the last conscience-ridden wretch ended his ten-story flight in a splatter on the pavement, we have kept a most uncomfortable companion trotting at our heels. Sometimes when life is hard and dangerous, as it was in Calvinistic Scotland and in the years when the Pilgrim Fathers fought the Indians, the climate, and themselves, our feelings of guilt grow very large and hungry and snap and slice at our hearts. But when life is easier and safer, or when in an explosion of long frustrated desires and needs we break old bonds and finally burst out of medievalism into the Renaissance or out of the feudal system into the French Revolution, that companion grows rather small and tame and we can deal with him with impunity.

While the long thunder of denunciations, the threats of flaming hell, of unending punishments for mortal sins is dying away as we enter another period of expansion, guilt is still something to be reckoned with. It is still a major danger for the social experimenter; still something which, while potentially valuable as a social control, is being used by social institutions as a means of manipulating people to their own advantage.

It is no accident that the most destructive of living creatures is the one in which the capacity to feel guilt is most fully developed. True enough, you can see this mechanism at work in the



dog, in the higher apes and, to a considerably lesser extent, in that feminine creature the cat. But it is pretty hard to conjure up the picture of a conscience-stricken bull, a rabbit living in a sense of shame, or of a guilty codfish. Indeed, it would seem that it is only those creatures that live with us that have a sense of guilt. This is quite different from those other two great curbs on action—pain and anxiety. These seem to go right down the animal series until we lose sight of them in patterns which may still be pain and anxiety but which begin to be so different from those that we know in ourselves that we cannot be sure that they are the same thing.

Guilt is a curb, a check on action, but a highly specialized one. It is designed to prevent us doing things to other people. It is one of those social devices which was evolved over an immense period of time—evolved rather than invented. It was evolved as a means of offsetting our hostility, our innate urge to assert ourselves and our aggressive attacks upon whoever frustrated us. It is the kind of curb that appears wherever creatures live together in groups and depend on each other. Some groups, such as those formed by sheep (at least modern ones), by starlings, and by minnows, are made up of individuals who don't hand much over to each other. We do; we hand over our lives, from departure at 9:05 until arrival at 9:37, to the train dispatcher, our wives to the obstetrician, our children to the Sunday driver. The feeling of guilt sits behind all three, ready to start in on them if they put their own interests before ours.

Like its two great running mates, pain and anxiety, guilt acts not simply as a curb on action but as an alarm system—a painful one at that. It is easy to imagine curbs on action which are not painful in the way they operate. We are, for instance, fitted with the capacity to inhibit certain activities—a surprise will stop a sneeze, men have been known to stop whatever they were doing to watch that triumph of modern industrial chemistry, nylon, especially if it is demonstrated in some detail and at length. Such curbs on action are quite free from the disagreeable; in fact, they

are often downright pleasant. It is quite a commentary upon the aggressiveness of our natures that these three great curbs—pain, anxiety and guilt—are fitted up to hurt.

The threat behind the guilt is, of course, the possible hostility of our neighbor or of the group to which we belong, or of the abstract sort of group that we have set up in our own mind as constituting "what we stand for," "the sort of thing we believe in," "conscience." There is no question that we should be afraid of other people. Let them turn against us and we are public enemy number one, or the kid that the gang throws stones at, or the woman that never gets asked anywhere.

Guilt feelings on the rampage can make us just as dangerous and as destructive to ourselves as the hostility of any group. There is the middle-aged woman who paces up and down the hospital ward, sleepless, unable to eat, declaring endlessly that she has done wrong—it makes no difference what, but it is often enough something that most of us would have done and then slept well after doing; the important thing is that it serves to express her guilt feelings, her self accusations. Possibly it was something such as an earlier abortion about which she had actually felt guilty from the first; just as likely however, the matter with which she is overtly concerned is quite superficial, such as a slighting remark she may have made to her best friend and which simply serves as a peg on which to hang feelings of guilt derived from other sources, or it may be an accusation of neglecting her mother during her later days. This last is particularly likely to be the case if her mother had dominated her excessively and if, below her apparent devotion to the latter, she had had a great deal of hostility concerning which she is now feeling guilty and for which she feels she should be punished. And punished she is, as are her sisters in guilt. Their consciences—unreliable and vindictive guides—see to that!

At this stage in our development we can't get on without consciences, any more than we could in former times without a night watchman in the streets or without little boys who swept out the

chimneys. But at that let us not bow down and worship them as some infallible spark sent from extraterrestrial regions to guide us through this wicked world. They are just as much the growth of our own experience as the size of our abdominal wall is the result of what we eat. They are useful enough, but no more reliable than our memory or our temper.

For, like its cousin anxiety, guilt is an alarm system that may, and does, develop defects. It can start sounding off on account of the wrong thing, it may hardly sound off at all, or it may sound off far too much, so that our life becomes an endless round of taking precautions.

It is pretty hard for us to grasp this viewpoint, for we are just emerging from a day which saw guilt-conscience—the “awareness of sin”—as something which was hardly part of ourselves. It was perhaps on loan. At least it formed the center of the “better part of our natures.” Those were the days when we had a higher and lower nature, a gross earthy body and a non-material part. Since then we have come together in one piece, with disturbing but most salutary results. However, the old way of living, if not the old concepts, tends to go on by its own momentum.

What we do inherit as human beings is the capacity to feel guilt—at least that seems to be the case in the light of our present knowledge. It may be that as we learn more about very early modifications of infant development and about the control of individual aggressions and of group hostility, we will find that this statement can be revised.

But what we feel guilty about, and the intensity with which we feel guilty about anything, from pinching our little sister's seat to pinching the company's funds, depends entirely on what happens to us from the time the doctor straightens up his back to inform any interested parties that mother has now a little whatever-it-is up to the current date.

The general nature of the things we are going to feel guilty about depends upon when and where we are born. Little 1947'ers are not going to grow up to tremble in their beds about

having gone fishing on Sunday or having called their dad an old such-and-such—but their counterparts of two generations back did. That was when divorce was a scandal, not part of a statistic. Stealing from a stranger is quite differently considered in the Atlantic states and the West African colonies.

If we pursue this logically rather than moralistically—and we will find a certain amount of resistance in ourselves against doing this—we emerge into that strange, exciting, and dangerous land where some have come before and into which all seem destined to enter. In it there are none of those absolutes which have been so dear and so necessary to our precarious past. There are no final goods and evils, no absolute truth or final fact, no ultimate values. Everything is relative, provisional, and conditioned upon time and circumstances.

Societies and individual lives built here cannot be based upon the certainty of permanence but upon the probability of change. It takes a bold and constant heart, one free from the pervasive, crippling anxieties and insecurities of our times, to live here. But we are flooding steadily into that new country—that new way of living. We are slowly beginning to see that if we mean to preserve the feeling of guilt as a social mechanism we must—there is no other authority—determine what we shall feel guilty about and we must determine how guilty we shall feel.

And of all the things that happen to us none are more important than are those of the first few years of life. There it is that the guilt-ridden mother, the over-conscientious father, can do the most damage. For, if youngsters can catch the sniffles from the parents—and they can and do—they most assuredly can pick up feelings of guilt which, unfortunately, do not disappear anything like as readily as the sneeze and the running nose.

Often enough the parent sets out deliberately to increase the child's tendency to experience feelings of guilt. Sometimes he tries to increase the tendency in general; then you have a Casper Milquetoast in the making. Sometimes the efforts are directed

towards increasing the feelings of guilt about any opposition to the parent or about the sexual life.

There is the woman in her thirties, competent enough in her profession, but almost hopelessly inadequate in her social life because of her feelings of inferiority in the presence of older women. When she was little, her mother vented her own frustrations upon her by saying that she was an unnatural child, she did not have the proper affection for her mother, that her mother would not live long. When the child was just entering her teens, the mother presented her with a photograph of herself to be kept as a remembrance after she had worked herself into an early grave for an ungrateful daughter. Still remarkably spry, the mother tells the now grown, but far from parentally emancipated woman, "You don't like anything about me, nothing but my checkbook." Against all these accusations the woman cannot speak back; indeed, even to her own physician she cannot talk about her mother save under very special circumstances. Her feelings of guilt rise up at once—"I feel disloyal; I feel that I'm acting like a heel to criticize her." In a burst of minor confidence she says, "I can't make up my mind whether I'm right or Mother is." Of course the mother often is. All through the child's growing years, the mother had taken advantage of her greater knowledge of how things should be done—buying hats, eating peas, managing quarrels, playing parchesi—to grave into the child's mind "Mother knows best." It was wrong to criticize and it was doubly wrong, wicked indeed, even to think that Mother was doing anything but toiling her life away in pure devotion to her little daughter's best interests.

Our ability to deal with the results of some of these sustained, day in and day out, meticulous attempts to build up feelings of guilt is still quite limited. Once that guilt-ring has been well and truly installed in someone's nose, that someone is going to be led around at will by the parent who put it in and by anyone else who seems to resemble the latter. We can do something, but

clearly the time to do something is when the process starts or before it starts, and that time is in early childhood. All this could be, and will be, easily prevented when we begin to pay as much attention to the kind of person who should bring up children as we do to the kind of person whom we choose to act as receptionist, as a sales girl, or as a foreman.

The same kind of process of building up guilt feelings can distort psychosexual development. There was the bitterly disillusioned mother who, infected a few years after marriage by her philandering husband, stood over her growing son with relentlessly watchful eye. As a youngster he could not play with little girls without searching questioning as to what he had been doing, what he had said, what they had said. He was told endlessly that he had better watch out, that he had better be careful or he would catch a disease as his father had done. When, in his early adolescent years he began to look at girls with an interest beyond marbles and softball, his mother's warnings redoubled.

It is not surprising that his first approach to sexual relationship was one of stealth, of fear, and frustration. He did not feel that he dare have anything to do with girls who belonged to his own group or with those who belonged to any groups that seemed to have the same status as his own. There remained only prostitutes and here, too, he was completely unsuccessful; his intense feelings of guilt entirely frustrated his attempts. When later he married, he was more successful, but even here the feelings of guilt persisted, though to a lesser degree.

While this building up of guilt in response to one or another aspect of living may be purposeful and deliberate, it can also come about indirectly—by contagion rather than by designed transmission. Hence the need of what Nietzsche vividly termed a transvaluation of values. The excessively conscientious, those whose guilt feelings set up hair-trigger and explosive response, the "unco' guid," do not merit social prestige and approbation, but are rather to be looked upon as dangerous sources of contagion. Above all, they must be prevented from contaminating

children and adolescents through exposure to their attitudes and ways of living.

No more vivid illustration of indirect transmission could be afforded than the situation which finally evoked an anxiety state in an able young social worker. This grew out of the conflict occasioned by the unbridgeable differences between the design of living in which her earlier years were spent and the new ways of thinking and dealing with things which her work was opening up to her.

Her parents, and particularly her father, had been excessively preoccupied with sex guilt. From a very early age the children had to dress alone in their own rooms with the door shut. If, as a child, she met her father on his way to the morning tub, he would hunch himself up and sidle along the passage, all the while draped in a voluminous bathrobe so that every possible resemblance to the human form was obscured, as it used to be in the old hoopskirt and shawl days. Magazines enjoying a national circulation and reputation were brought home only after pictures which showed any epidermis between the ankles and the neckline had been cut out. When the girl was fourteen, she was not allowed to see her little six-year old brother in the bath. All this fantastic behavior, however, was displayed without the benefit of words. Nothing was ever said directly about sexual living, the children were not directly threatened or warned, there was nothing but a shocked silence.

When the girl grew up and went for her training as a social worker, the contrast between the way in which people actually lived and the way in which they had seemed to exist in the minds of her guilt-preoccupied parents was so great that she began to develop anxiety attacks, felt that everything was unreal and grew depressed to the point where, at times, it did not seem worthwhile to carry on. After a long period of working with a psychiatrist, she gradually acquired a new set of values and was able to manage her life in this new everyday world with fair dexterity.

The "shocked silence" is part of the works of the taboo—that

most ancient of the devices whereby our capacity to feel guilt is manipulated by social institutions for their own advantage. All institutions, religious, tribal, class, struggling to preserve their dominance, have made the taboo pay dividends. "They are things you just don't discuss"; "that's sacred, you've no right whatsoever to talk about it"; the dangerous thoughts for harboring which the Japanese imprisoned tens of thousands of their own people every year; "it's the Fuehrer's will"; "it's the Party line"—all these have been effective in bolstering up regimes the ways of which could not stand open scrutiny.

These taboos can be inserted into our heads at any time, of course. It is true that in the later years they require more force to drive them in; but enough beatings at Belsen, enough burnings at the stake, enough stretching on the ancient Spanish racks were enough to do it. All but the most stout-hearted would just as soon think of something else as whatever happened to be forbidden.

When we are very young these taboos slip in as easily as porridge and pablum. Unfortunately they don't share the later fate of these two wishy-washy dishes but stay with us, to be defended later with fury and fanaticism as part of our "national heritage," "the priceless possessions of our ancient culture," or as the "wave of the future." This must, and does, cause serious reflection upon our modest appropriation of the term *homo sapiens* as designating ourselves in pleasant contrast to our cousins and more distant relatives in the living world. The spectacle of men exerting themselves to the utmost, pouring out effort, resources, and lives to protect their right not to think about things they have been told they should not think about, protecting the "not done," fencing off the tabooed, enshrining the sacred to the advantage of a few and the detriment of many, is something to stand and look at. There are not as many of these preserved areas as there were, but if the new state authoritarianism has its say they will grow back again, like flies and taxes. And it is not just that they will grow either in the political, the clerical, or the social field. All authoritarian systems are in competition, but when they



are threatened they gang up; the one cannot exist without the other. And the freedom of enquiry, of thinking, and of expression which are essential to sound social health cannot exist in a taboo-riddled culture.

There is another source of guilt in our society—one derived from our industrial-urban type of life. This, quite simply, is tension. It is not yet fully recognized that, just as anxiety will appear when our tension has been too high for too long, so will guilt. Hence the odd but real experience that you can get away with something when you are relaxed that will give you all kinds of twinges when you are jaded and tense. Of course the feeling of guilt born of rising tension almost invariably becomes attached to some particular matter, and from there on we are apt to ascribe our feelings to that matter rather than to the general rise in tension. For instance, the woman grown tense by long highspeed work in industry may attach her feeling of guilt to a period of earlier hostility towards her mother to which she has paid no attention for a decade; or the man driven beyond his capacity may begin to feel that he did wrong in manipulating his income tax returns in the boom twenties, a matter which he had previously regarded as one for self-congratulation. This source of guilt, of which we have hitherto been unaware, is important since it is related to one of the major aspects of modern industrial society; namely, its tendency to produce tension.

What is happening about guilt? What is going to happen? We seem to be coming to a trough in the long billow-like fluctuations in the amount of guilt which we have experienced over the centuries. That has happened before but this time something new has been added. We have begun to manipulate our own natures.

If we look at the other alarm systems, pain and anxiety, this becomes clear. There is now complete unanimity that pain should be prevented or alleviated at once. The word "now" is written advisedly. The introduction of chloroform to obstetrical use was actually opposed by some on the grounds that it was

contrary to religious dogmata, that for women to experience pain during childbirth was ordained and, therefore, "good." This assertion has, fortunately, fallen by the wayside in the course of the long retreat into which such dogmata have been forced.

We are moving in the same direction as far as anxiety is concerned, though it cannot be claimed that we have made anything like as much progress. The situation has been obscured by many misconceptions. We have already referred to one of these in our discussion of the myth that anxiety is cowardly and not felt by the brave man. There can be little doubt, however, that considerable progress will be made towards the elimination of anxiety within the next few decades.

Evidence of the damage done by prolonged anxiety has been piling up in our hospitals and out-patient departments, in unhappy marriages and unstable children, for long enough. Now that we are beginning to see it for what it is, we are starting to act. The emphasis which has been placed upon security in current and pending social legislation shows clearly enough our determination to do something about anxiety.

All this busying ourselves about pain and anxiety is in line with our basic drive as living creatures—the spread of our control over events. For, clearly, when these alarm systems are acting normally, they sound off only when our control over events is, or threatens to become, ineffective. Hence, when we take steps to abolish the causes of pain and anxiety, we are simply continuing our march towards our age-old objective, the control over our world.

What we are going to do about guilt is still obscure. We haven't made up our minds. One of the things that gives us pause—and very reasonably—is the fact that the feeling of guilt is one of the main protections that we have against each other. If we could solve the king pin human problem (every philosophy and religion from the dawn days on has had a crack at it and failed) of how to direct our aggression away from the field of

interpersonal relations and allow it full expression in the individual-environmental field, we could set about the business of clearing away the old guilt bugaboos with a light heart.

When we have succeeded in directing our energies away from the bloodletting and slaughtering of our endless wars, away from the interminable skirmishing in the home, the office, and the store and spend them in attacking cancer, ageing, housing, and education, those savage curbs of guilt which we find necessary to prevent our hostile impulses from wholly overwhelming our social structure can be at last abandoned.

No doubt plenty of heaving and hauling will have to be done to pull them off their pedestals, to shove entrenched social institutions off the highway. If we allow ourselves to become tangled up in the ancient arguments about moral issues, we may find the going rather exasperating, but the issue of our ultimate control over the feelings of guilt can be very clearly put upon the basis of greater effectiveness and better social health. On this ground we usually win. It comes too close to home to too many people for even the most ancient of myths to hold out for long. We won the fight against the employment of children in industry, we won the campaigns for the recognition of certain trades as dangerous, for the establishment of industrial medical reforms—the protection of workers against dust and gasses, long hours, and unguarded machinery. We are winning the battles for better and better standards of nutrition, for the periodic medical examinations of children, for vaccination, inoculation and quarantine. There is no doubt that we can ultimately establish control over that ancient affliction, the feeling of guilt.

## CHAPTER VI

### *“GOOD” AND “BAD”*

THINGS DON'T TAKE ROOT AND GROW BEFORE THE SOIL IS READY for them. That is true for everything from carrots to helicopters. The motive power of steam was known for almost two thousand years before it was set to hauling and pulling and turning all over the world and, in the process, altering our lives as nothing else has since the discovery of the wheel and the lever. Hero, in B. C. Alexandria, with a flash of modern thinking set it to work, but the basic design of living saw to it that its energy was confined to opening and closing the doors of little shrines and raising buckets of holy water—obvious manifestations of the potency of the local deity.

It is true that we have more knowledge than our predecessors. That has been ensured by the invention of written records and by our success in producing, with a rapidly diminishing outlay of work and in growing profusion, so much to eat, to wear, and to keep ourselves warm with that we have freed an enormous number of people to think, to enquire, and to plan, who at an earlier day would have been just one cabbage row ahead of starvation.

But it is by no means certain that we are fundamentally more capable of using that knowledge than our predecessors of two thousand years ago would have been if they had had our data, our technical skill, our general know-how, and one other thing.—and this is the keystone—our modern methods of thinking.

Those simple questions, “How does it work?”, “What causes this?”, “If I do that, then what happens to this?” signify a way of looking at things which has fostered the endless growth of discovery, invention, and concept through these last several centuries.

When the questions asked were, “Is it ‘good’ or ‘bad’?”, “Is it the manifestation of Beelzebub?”, or an indication of displeasure of any one of the little gods of the woods and streams who were so very numerous before they began to be replaced by the medieval religions, then we had to walk or be towed along by sweating horses, the most universal anaesthesia was a hearty crack on the head, nutrition was a matter of how much you could find to eat, and public safety depended upon who your friends were and the state of your own legs.

One of the major reasons why, with all our progress, we have been teeter-tottering along the edge of disaster this last half century is because that old moralistic thinking is still being applied in the very area from which all these appalling dangers are spewing out, our relations with each other.

We can see how this “good-bad” thinking works clearly enough in societies other than our own. The Japs said that attack was a good thing, retreat was bad. They attacked regardless of terrain, manpower, or air protection. Attack was good, so they attacked. They were interested only in men who could attack; they were not interested to any extent even in their own sick. Hence, though they controlled all the quinine supplies of any importance, they took no adequate precautions to prevent malaria, and the fighting strength of their units was materially sapped by the number who were incapacitated or who died from this thoroughly preventable disease. They believed that a military life was good and that anything that competed with it was bad. Hence, while our scientific institutes and research centers were immensely expanded and afforded our men the advantage at every turn, many of theirs were closed up and others were turned over to producing minor war supplies.

Yet no one who looks at Japanese brought up in Western civilization could ever consider that they were basically incapable of intellectual competition. Their failure in modern warfare was largely due to their failure to adopt sufficiently modern scientific ways of thinking.

Our failure to manage our relations with each other, among groups and among classes and national units, is of precisely the same nature. Declaring that hostility is "bad," that aggression against one's neighbor is "evil," is a way of thinking that has had its day. That day has produced the Spanish Inquisition and Belsen. No one will quarrel with the objectives that those who have used these moralistic methods have sought, but the objectives are not the property of those moralists. They have been striven for by men since we first decided to live in groups. The objectives still stand but no thinking person can feel that that way of thinking and acting about human relations now constitutes anything but a dismal failure and that to continue to use it in our desperate attempts to control the rising frictions, hostilities, and aggressions of the times will almost certainly lead to disaster.

Things do not survive, however, unless they have some value—unless they are of some use to the living creature in the eternal struggle to dominate events. If they are of no value they become washed out in the course of the innumerable reproductions which lie behind each living creature. Witness the human hair which now seems on the point of receding from the scene altogether. There was a time when those without a cosy covering must have been hard put to survive, but for many thousands of years it has been of no particular survival value. Indeed, in hot climates it has just been a wet blanket; hence it is on its way out. The fact that it makes a creaking noise under a stiff dress shirt is annoying but possibly pulls no weight in the evolutionary process.

The beliefs, once very common, that making a clay image of your enemy and sticking pins through its heart or shoving your spear into his shadow when he wasn't looking would get rid of him, have all but disappeared. They didn't work and they have

been replaced by methods based on much more realistic ways of thinking.

Moralistic thinking is also in the process of disappearing. We are living through one of those exciting, contentious, and distinctly uncomfortable periods when an old design of living is being hustled away amid furious protests and a new one brought into being without any very skilled assistance.

What have been the values of moralistic thinking which have made it predominant over so many centuries? In the first instance it is simple, it saves effort, it permits great numbers of people of the most varied capacities to form rapid judgments concerning a great variety of things. It affords an easy guide to the course to be taken. If it is a "bad" thing, efforts are to be made to limit or destroy, or at least avoid it. If it is a "good," then it is to be accepted, promoted, or indulged in.

In this way, the necessity of working out separately the nature of each situation which confronts the individual is avoided. Where moralistic thinking is dominant in the culture of a people, one finds very naturally the existence of codes which facilitate the formation of those "good" and "bad" judgments. In many primitive Negroid cultures these codes take the form of a series of taboos. In the earlier Christian cultures the code was represented by the Ten Commandments. Where these codes are active the individual does not attempt to work out the significance of the situation for himself. He simply evaluates it in terms of the code. This through its ignoring of the complexity of most situations, frequently leads to arbitrary, clumsy, and, at times, contradictory reactions to events.

We are familiar with the man to whom "black is black and white is white," and we are aware of how clumsy and ineffective his social behavior can be. After prolonged study, a man who had come to the psychiatrist presenting a consuming hatred for his mother became aware that he also required her approval, that he had incestuous desires for her, and that he felt guilty if he did anything to hurt her. When it was pointed out that his relation-

ship to her was complex, he replied, self-censoriously, that he could see that it was inconsistent. With this judgment he was quite content to stop. It seemed to him a natural end-point, as indeed it was in terms of ordinary thinking. But it was just as though he had said that the action of the carburetor in his balky car was inconsistent and left it at that.

But clumsy, ineffective, dangerous as a plague-infected settlement in the modern world though this kind of thinking may be, still it was the only kind available for enormous periods of time, and it permitted man, though very slowly, to get up and stand on his feet. It enabled him to live with others in larger and larger groups, to differentiate and distribute jobs; it enabled him very gradually to increase his productivity until a few, and then a growing number, could be sufficiently freed from constant preoccupation with the next meal and the immediate job of staying alive.

Essentially its strength seems to lie in the fact that it ensures group agreement and action. Where the group is small, as in village life, this system of thinking permitted reasonably unified reactions to a situation—"right is right, and wrong is wrong," and the way of the deviant, whether he was a social innovator or an anti-social individualist, was tough, to the point of extinction, if necessary. This kind of automatic mass action in the face of the unknown, the untried, the possibly threatening, was far from a disadvantage. Judgment as to "good" and "bad" having been formed, the group closed its ranks and its minds. "Dangerous thoughts," which might have led in precarious days to divisions which were perilous indeed, were prevented.

This is the thinking of the weak, the insecure, whether it is that of the little groups struggling for survival in the forest clearings of the pleistocene period or that of ancient institutions enfeebled by modern inroads and threatened by extinction, or of new groups fighting for a foothold—witness the Communist Party line and the Nazi doctrine. Moralistic thinking and the authoritarian design of living are pieces of the same pie. One



cannot amount to much without the other, and neither can flourish in a society in which free enquiry is strong.

The right to think for yourself, to try to understand how things work rather than to classify them as "good" or "bad" in your group's approved guidebook to values, can only exist in people and in societies that are strong and secure in themselves.

As the first little groups have run together into communities, larger settlements, national groups, and now into a world which is rapidly becoming more and more interdependent, production has gradually risen further and further above consumption.

What are the forces which are beginning to break up this age-old, immensely powerful and immensely pervasive way of thinking? Age-old it is, for it was old before written history began. It is a way of dealing with things which has moulded so many of our social institutions, has been so intimately and so widely represented in our literature and poetry that it has come to seem almost a part of us, like our breathing. Vast numbers of us have believed there never was, there never could be, any alternative.

Yet it is breaking up, as did the old pagan religions, the concept of the earth as the center of the universe, and the very old and very powerful feudal system.

It has been breaking up insidiously over the last several centuries, but so slowly that, like a glacier on the move, you would never know it if you just stood and looked. At any given day, it seemed massive, immobile, and as eternal as Time. But if you noted its landmarks and came back and looked again, you could see that it really had moved, pieces had broken off and disappeared, there were rumblings and rendings within portending the rise of vast pressures.

The last century has seen this titanic movement gain more and more speed. Change now takes place visibly and clearly between man's boyhood and his adult years, and at last almost from year to year.

As it became apparent that the potency of this way of thinking was being threatened a number of devices were introduced as a

means of supporting it—propping it as one does an old building, the foundations of which are breaking up. To offset the fact that it was beginning to fail glaringly to control the aggressiveness and hostility of men towards each other, the myths of original sin and predestination were set up. In this way, the supporters of the system discounted its failures ahead of time. This was their way of taking out insurance against its inability to deliver the promised results. For, if a portion of humanity—the size of this varied with the moralist—was clearly foreordained to trip down the primrose path in lighthearted search of sin and evil, then clearly it could not and should not be expected that the efforts of the moralists, no matter how earnest, could stay what was clearly the workings of providence.

The fate of these props has been that of props in general—they did something of a job for a time but now they have fallen down and lie around without people noticing them, unless they wonder what happened to them and actually go look for them.

Of the nature of the forces which are bringing about these vast, slow changes we have as yet little precise knowledge. This much seems sure—they are indirect; they do not, or at least did not, originate in a conscious determination on the part of men that changes must be made. The rebels, the innovators, the irreconcilables, and the iconoclasts came after the event. In a sense they were part of the process, but the process had its origin not in them but elsewhere.

The forces were indirect in the sense that the forces which have caused whole new species of animals to come into existence and old ones to die out, have been indirect. Slight variations in the earth's orbit around the sun produced a recession of the ice cap and a degree of heat which fostered the development of animals which could get rid of heat rapidly, but was fatal to the old kinds which had specialized in keeping warm.

Another comparable indirect action covering a much shorter period of time is that which we see going on in our own lifetimes—the action which the introduction of steam as a source of power

has had upon the relations between men and women. Cheaper and cheaper power has meant that heavy muscles mean less and less. The progressive lightening of industrial jobs, the urbanization of the home consequent upon the centralization of industry around sources of cheap power, the loss of employment about the earlier farm home, have opened up industrial occupations to more and more women. It has put money in their pockets, and money is independence, independence of the old-time husband, of village gossip, and of the old secondary role.

The forces which are breaking up the moralistic design of living are indirect in just this sense. Of those that we have been able to recognize, production seems to be the most potent. As soon as we began to produce enough to set us free from the endless preoccupation over the next meal, over enough fuel to keep us warm, over weapons good enough to make the fellows in the next settlement keep their distance, then we began to have time enough to figure things out. Much of that figuring, of course, went into trying to work out better ways of getting more by working less (and much effort is still spent on this), but a certain amount was spent on figuring out human relations. It wasn't necessary all the time to use the old shorthand "good/bad" method. You could really settle down and try to work out the reason why, if it was all right to cut the throat of some fellow from the next village, you could not do something similar about your cousin Daniel, who was so obviously a so-and-so. The village always raised a howl about such things, said that they were wrong; but anyway what did wrong mean? Dangerous thoughts, for which many a man has had his head chopped off, but potent ones.

There have been great societies before our time—the Egyptian, the Greek, and the Roman—in which production rose sufficiently to set a number free to think. But, for reasons of which we as yet know nothing, none of these societies succeeded in inventing the machine. Hence production never went high enough to set the common man free in any number, and, in fact,

the common man was in all probability a slave. All three of these societies declined and began to disappear as their value systems were broken up under the impact of freed thinking. They could not make the transition to a new way of looking at things. The birth pangs were too much for them. They could not make the switch from fetal existence to life in the open world.

Our chances look better. The new way of thinking began far back, showing up in definite form in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the new ideas about experimentation which Francis Bacon worked out. With the torrential rise in the number of things to use, to eat, to keep ourselves warm or cool with, to dress up in, to ride about in, more and more people found time to sit and ponder about themselves, and about their neighbors, and why they either didn't get along or else seemed to get along only too well. It is not surprising that the novel began its expansion towards its modern million-copy circulation about the time when it grew possible for men to get enough to eat without having to stumble out of bed at five to milk the cow and crawl back in again long after dark, when the bought loaf replaced wife-mixed dough, and water could be heated in a boiler and not in a kettle. As more and more people were able to straighten their backs and look up, there came the tabloid, the movie, the radio, all pouring out endless things about people and offering endless opportunity for vicarious experiences through identification with an infinity of people doing all those things, admittedly rather trite and adolescent, that sob sisters and script writers could dream up.

Still more significant has been the mushroom development of tools invented for determined attacks upon the hows, whys, and wherefors of what human beings actually do, not what they should or should not be doing. These are very new. The first laboratory of experimental psychology was established in 1879. Psychiatry and sociology, as modern sciences, are still more recent. The public opinion polls, the guidance clinics, the social worker, the juvenile court, are inventions of yesterday. But the

spotlight is on them. If they serve our needs, we can hope to get through to the new designs of living that earlier great societies died trying to reach. If they don't, nothing else will. The physical sciences can give us nothing save better ways of producing things; they can't give us the means of seeing to it that we don't use these things to blow ourselves up the more effectively. Industry can only give us more, and government applies what is already known.

The new kind of thinking is at work in those who are trained to use these tools. So strong a hold has the old way, however, that for the most part the new way of thinking is only used when these people are actually at work; when they go home and become fathers and grouchies, boy friends and daughters, they think once more in terms of the old “good/bad” system.

But when they are at work, it is different. Then it is possible, by putting painstakingly collected piece to piece, for them to see emerging behind the man who has no use for women and whose wife is “just one of the gang, doesn't expect you to saddle her horse or carry her grips for her,” the resentment and hatred for his mother and the inability to get along with any woman save the very few who have some resemblance to his much loved father. They can see behind the boy who is three grades below his actual ability, who feels paralyzingly inadequate, the brilliant, possessive father whose affection for his son has thrust into every crevice of the latter's life and driven him into hobbling inferiority.

It is possible to see the vast mists of guilt and anxiety which drift across organized society, gathering here and thinning there in response to local conditions. It is possible to see them as by no means inevitable and as by no means explicable in terms of current cultural myths. It is possible to set about uncovering the motivation of the murderer, and of the man who assaulted the child, as objectively as we set about dissecting a tumor.

Indeed, some of the most substantial progress has been made in dealing with anti-social behavior. While we still make full

use of that time-saving trick of the moralistic system and describe men in terms of the anti-social act which they have performed—as murderers, bigamists or arsonists—actually we have almost given up that kind of thinking. It is a little like calling the Ambassador “Your Excellency,” when Sunday’s columnist has let us in on what a dull dog he actually is; a mere form of words. Most of us know now that there aren’t any murderers or bigamists or arsonists in the sense that there are weasels and rabbits and cigarettes. There are people who commit murder and bigamy and arson, and they are people about whom we have to do something.

We are still struggling away from the old talon law which says that if you knock out my cousin’s eye, my brother and I will knock out yours. It is difficult to keep our blood pressures down and ourselves set on the main issue. But that issue is finally emerging in the form of our determination to change the people who show this kind of behavior, and so ultimately to prevent it altogether. To do this we have got to piece together motive and action and event; not to establish guilt or innocence, but to demonstrate first that the man did what he is said to have done, and then to show how it came about and how he can be changed so that he can be returned with safety to society. If punishment is the answer, then fine, let’s use it; if imprisonment will work the transformation, by all means imprison; if nothing will, let’s make up our minds whether we want to keep him permanently out of circulation or get rid of him otherwise.

By and large we haven’t paid much attention to whether the old method worked, at least not as long as it seemed to satisfy the outraged feelings of the injured party and to meet the demands of the current concepts of “good” and “bad.” The price of murder was your own life, taken all at once some morning or spread out over thirty years in some penitentiary. Bigamy and robbery, with and without violence, had their allotted number of years.

The system was extremely inefficient. It frequently resulted in the release to society of men who, at the end of their sentence,

were just as unstable and dangerously anti-social as before. Indeed, often they were considerably worse. You can no more practice good citizenship sitting alone in a cell, or eating and exercising in enforced silence with other conspicuously ineffective citizens, than you can get your broken leg into walking shape again by immobilizing it in bed until the day before your return to your old job as mail carrier. Sometimes the system left men secluded from the world long after the anti-social trends for which they had been imprisoned had disappeared.

Making the punishment fit the crime was like fitting the heads of all the Joneses into size  $7\frac{1}{4}$  hats, all the Smiths into  $7\frac{1}{2}$  and all the FitzDicks into  $6\frac{1}{2}$ . It was the thought-economizing short circuit of the moralistic system at its silliest and most dangerous.

With the gradual emergence of a scientific approach to human behavior, some new devices have been invented which, while having the inadequacy of all early inventions, certainly are heading in the right direction. The indeterminate sentence begins to give real weight to the fact that it is the man, with all his background of experiences, all his potentialities and weak spots, that is the fundamentally important issue. It begins to give real scope to our attempts to answer the question of when he is ready and safe to return to society. The modern system of parole is a trial under test conditions, and seems destined to evolve and grow.

Now progressive thought, confident that it is at least beginning to get somewhere, is putting forward the idea that the court should confine itself to determining whether the individual actually committed the anti-social behavior of which he is accused. This, in itself, can be a matter of great difficulty. The number of times that you actually catch the fellow at it, whatever "it" is, doesn't add up to an impressive total. Of course if you come upon him sitting on his wife's chest and beating her over the head that is usually an open and shut proposition, though it really is quite astonishing how often he will assert that there is nothing to it—just a friendly little argument. Still more astonishingly, his wife may turn around and back him up, and you

undergo a rapid red-faced transformation from Sir Galahad to an old fool and a busybody breaking into the intimacies of domestic life.

But anyone who has experienced that unpleasant "gone" feeling on discovering that his pocketbook has been lifted, or come back from holidays to find that the furniture has been moved out by an apparently respectable moving concern who now can't find where it was put, knows what the judge, the lawyers, the police, and the jury are up against. Anyone who has tried to figure out—it's just about a guessing game—who hit who first, who said what when, and who the father is, knows that we have been taking another strange, fermenting, furiously dynamic thing for granted, namely, the human memory.

It is not just that people are liars; that can be understood, and, being understood, you can make allowances for it. The thing that makes enemies out of old friends, that hits the headlines and fattens the lawyers' fees, is that memories are not like phonograph records that are stored away to be mislaid, destroyed, or brought out on demand. They are part of ourselves and grow and change as we do. The kind of person we are and what has happened to us since, will determine what we remember.

If the court is going to decide who did what when, then the training of those who are going to solve this eternally slippery question must include a considerable period of study of the nature of the human being.

The new ideas about dealing with anti-social behavior go on from there to suggest that once it has been determined who did it, then another group of personnel should decide what is to be done about rendering that individual safe to return to society.

Criticism of this procedure has, on occasion, taken the form of asserting that this would represent a softening of attitude on the part of society and that, in consequence, the amount of anti-social behavior would increase. This is actually far from the case. It is true that some individuals, who under the present situation remain confined at public expense long after they ceased to



represent any danger to society, would be released earlier. It is equally true, moreover, that there would be a great curtailment in the release of men who at present are sent out into society as dangerous as they were before simply because the time limit set by the judge some months or years before, has elapsed.

It is a matter well known, not only to those who specialize in human behavior but also, through the press, to the general public, that under the present system men far too often show within a few months after their release from jail precisely the same kind of anti-social behavior which had resulted in their first confinement. Not infrequently the final history of such persons will reveal a consistent repetition of the same kind of behavior throughout their whole lives. Periods in prison are interspersed with short periods in the community. During the latter, further anti-social behavior is demonstrated, often to the danger, hurt, and loss of their fellows. Each reinstatement in jail is preceded by a trial, the costs of which must be borne by the community.

For this wasteful and long drawn out procedure can be substituted a period of segregation from society which would last until all danger to the community from the individual's behavior had disappeared. There can be no doubt that in the case of the particularly involved and difficult behavioral problems segregation would be lifelong.

To achieve this advance the remnants of moralistic thinking in this field have to be destroyed. We cannot continue to think in terms of these unreal abstractions—murderers, robbers, arsonists. We cannot continue to be dominated by these age-old beliefs that the man who has shown anti-social behavior has "sinned" against society and that by making atonement through undergoing a certain period of punishment he is now in a position to make a fresh start.

To replace these ancient concepts by those based upon the principle that our primary concern is the protection of society and of the individual through the correction of his anti-social trends appears to be the course which modern thinking is taking.

The foregoing brief description of moralistic thinking in operation in certain of our legal institutions serves to illustrate the conflict between this type of thinking and thinking based on the new ways of looking at behavior—that is, how does it work and how can it be controlled? If you put these two ways of thinking about things side by side you can see what different breeds of cats they actually are; you can see all the secondary consequences that come from them, all the subsidiary concepts that they father and which, in turn, drift off into other fields of living and there set up their own trains of consequences.

The moralistic design of living fathers the procedure of thinking of people not as people but as embezzlers or murderers and so labelling them. Under its tutelage, Lombroso could find quite a public to look eagerly at his pictures of criminal types and to reflect with complacency that it was astonishing what a resemblance there was between some of them and their own in-laws. From this point on it was an easy step to join hands with the age-old myth, "You can't change human nature—once a thief, always a thief."

The old system perpetuates the ancient ideas of atonement, repentance, penance—crimes must be paid for. In long gone-by yesterdays you actually could buy your way out of almost anything quite officially—a murder was worth so many sheep or horses to the victim's family. Nowadays the fine is the emasculated echo of this. The rigid sentence, the guilt, the innocence, the black and white evaluation of human behavior, all are part of the crowd of supporters around the old system. The new one states that anti-social behavior is a problem to be solved just like transportation, cheaper hospitalization, and the control of price levels. The fundamental thing is the protection of the rest of us and the welfare of the individual.

Let us get down into the works of this very live issue. Our share of time here has by chance coincided with the last days of a system of vast antiquity, a system in which innumerable people have lived and worked and which has brought them some hap-

pininess, some security, and much frustration. It has been dying gradually and almost unnoticed for centuries? Now the breakup is coming, the last flurries have started. It is going and in a little while will be gone. If what takes its place is not a new and vital way of life, our future will be that of Rome and Greece and Egypt.

This time it looks as though we had a chance. A new design of thinking has been in the making since the days of the first early experimenters. New concepts have been worked out, new tools—the social sciences, the new social institutions—are being invented with growing profusion.

Against this, the representatives of the old way of thinking have raised all possible resistance, have brought endless criticism, set up all possible delays and frustrations. And at the last they have raised what, to them, is the impregnable defence, the Maginot Line par excellence. This is that if you destroy the old system of thinking you will have no final basis for judgment; that even if you actually do throw out the words "good," and "bad," at least you still have to decide what you are going to support and what you are going to try to get rid of. How are you going to manage to get agreement on that if you have not eternal and fundamental "goods" and "evils"?

It is very difficult for people to think in terms of an open system. We like the closed kind rounded off with a beginning and an end; our universe in the old days when the earth used to be its center was a place of definite dimensions and limits—there was a definite up and down, and if you stepped off the edge there were some flat statements as to where you would land. It is quite disconcerting to think, and most people don't try, of an infinite universe that is contracting or expanding (depending on the current status of astrophysical thought). Likewise it is extremely disturbing to most people to think of time as having no beginning or end. It seems much more reassuring to think that someone started it, even if you have to go on and say that that someone was always there, in order to meet the embarrassing question of who

started the someone. At least it gives you some of the same kind of cosy feeling that you had when you were very little and Daddy and Mum were there and just simply had always been there.

But astronomy and physics, chemistry and mathematics have come together to take away the closed system. Neither time nor space, nor yet space-time have a beginning or an end. And yet we have survived, though, true enough, for the most part by not thinking about this and its logical consequences—we don't have to.

We are now coming into a future in which our design of living, our system of values, may very well be those of an open system rather than of the old closed set-up with its fundamental verities, eternal values, and ultimate facts. It is an open system in that truth is the best possible approximation; values change with circumstances and facts are simply working and workable postulates.

We are coming out of a period where all relations of life were based upon the probability of permanence, into a culture based upon the certainty of change. As we look back we can see now, with the advantage of the panoramic sweep that the centuries have given, that what looked like eternal truths were simply postulates which were being modified so slowly that, like the distant stars, they seemed fixed and permanent.

In this emerging way of thinking about human beings, what are the basic working concepts? What are the concepts concerning man's basic function? Clearly if we did not know that the basic function of the automobile was transportation, and looked with the naive eyes of a visitor from the outer planets on this curious and involved structure resting on four disks, containing three different kinds of fluids, having one arrangement to make a noise, and another to emit rays in the visible spectrum, and two shelves on which could often be found in various postures those curious, aggressive, split-up-the-middle creatures, we might well take some time to figure out the explanation of the gas, oil, and

water, the horn, the lights, and the seats. But as soon as the basic function is understood to be transportation, they all fall into place.

The same is true of the human being. What can we posit as his basic function? That he seeks to establish and extend control over his environment and that, in general, the more he succeeds in doing so, the more effective he will be. Consequently, in our attempts to understand human behavior, and in our efforts to modify its manifestations, we shall be the more successful the more we think and act in these terms. It would, of course, be extremely superficial criticism to assert that this need lead to an anarchical state of affairs. It is clear that control of the environment is much more effectively realized if it is carried out as a joint enterprise. The organism is not a complete entity and cannot reach full expression save in relationship to others.

True enough, this description of a basic function of the human organism must also take its place in the open system of values, and for that reason it must be regarded as a working postulate undoubtedly in the process of evolution and change. Its present validation is empiric—it works. It worked in Nazi Germany, where it showed that that culture could not stand the ultimate competition because too many people were excluded from full expression. It works in the democracies where, despite the great difficulties which we have in operating this kind of social organization, more people are given a chance to express themselves, more people can throw their ideas, concepts, plans, and inventions into more or less free competition, and consequently better ways of managing things, of attempting problems, of modifying events tend to emerge.

We can be, and are, puzzled and confused and often purposely misled. We are shown the economic man, the patriotic man, the “good” man. We are told that humility and piety and happiness are our chief ends. Most of these are just carrots, rendered venerable and uncriticizable by time; others represent partial views.

Happiness is an essential; but it is not the root, it is a derivative. It is the hum of the well-tuned motor. If we are truly frustrated, if we can in no way control our world, then we most certainly are not happy and almost as certainly are in poor mental health.

## CHAPTER VII

### *SOCIAL INVENTIONS*

IF YOU OR I TURNED TO FIND THAT THE CIGARETTE LIGHTER ON THE little table beside our chair was really Aladdin's Lamp, what would we wish for? No doubt the first few rubs would be for some pleasing examples of the things in which man has always shown the most whole-hearted interest—just to try it, of course. But once we had become convinced that we really had the Lamp, that we were awake, and that we could rub into existence anything that we could dream up, what would we try for? Certainly not the old seven-league boots of yesterday, the magic tube through which you could see right across the valley, or the little porcelain figure that could tell you what people were thinking about in the cities far, far away—at least ten miles—on the other side of the mountains. It would be hard to dream up unlimited supplies of cash unless at the same time you dreamed up a whole series of complicated events which would enable you to slide it past the nose of the income tax collector. The excess profits tax, inheritance taxation, and the taxes on unearned income would make even Aladdin's Lamp strain at the seams to keep up.

You wouldn't try for these things because, with the sad exception of the latter, we've got them. We can go and come, listen and look just about as far and as fast, and as long and as much as we want to at present. (No doubt, of course, our appetite soon will grow to meet the present plethora and regain its ancient overlap.)

No, the things that we probably would want—certainly if we had got past the ninth grade and could understand even the big words in the advertisements—would be better ways of dealing with human relations, rather than material inventions. Curiously, such things as better ways of managing, social inventions, and discoveries never figured in the fairy tales we knew when we were very little. And it is the fairy tales about magic ways of spanning distance and time, of making things, of plenty and of health, that we work at and make come true when we grow up. Some we have mastered, and it will be interesting to see whether they will begin to disappear from the fairy tale books; others, like eternal youth and voyages to the stars, we are still working for.

But some things that we need as bitterly as we ever needed food, fuel, and shelter have never appeared in the fairy tales that everywhere, throughout history, have been told by men and women to their children.

What are social inventions? Perhaps we run the risk of easing the death rattle in the throat of the old mind/body concept by suggesting a contrast between social and material inventions. On the other hand, the term is useful in pointing out as sharply as possible the need for inventions in that most dangerous area in society—our relations with each other. Of course, since our society is unitary, inventions that are packed with real dynamism are going to cause changes throughout and often at the most unexpected and embarrassing places. Some inventions are clearly social from the outset, such as the various social sciences, strikes, the novel. Others were introduced with one thing in mind and then found to have acquired secondary functions which sometimes grew up to be bigger than their dad.

The introduction of steam as power, for instance, has led to the progressive liberation of women and the no less progressive frustration of old men. Cheap power has put machinery in the place of muscles and at one stroke taken away one of the few convincing arguments of man's superiority over what he has had the temerity to call his spare rib, and has put that creature who, we



must confess, often succeeded in covering up her origin in a distinctly pleasing manner, right alongside him in the factory.

The self same invention has fathered the interchangeable part idea, the assembly line and the speed-up. The old, slowly acquired handicraft (in some acquired more by courtesy than in fact) is not needed. What is needed is someone spry, resilient, who isn't a possible health hazard and who is a few decades away from a pension. Hence the fellows who used to boss the little workshops—the reliable old carpenter with the bent back and the tobacco-stained beard and the saturnine boss painter with the unusually pungent halitosis from swallowing too much lead in his sandwiches—are living in little rooms in the boarding-house areas, thinking that Dr. Townsend is a pretty good fellow. By 1980, when forty per cent of the adult population will be over the age of forty, we are going to have a pretty problem if the trend towards early unemployment goes on.

The social worker, the public opinion poll, and the mental hygiene movement are inventions the effects of which were more clearly social right from the start. The mental hygiene movement has been particularly fertile; a whole series of secondary inventions have come from it—the child guidance clinics, the psychiatric functions of the juvenile court, the mental hygiene clinic, marriage counselling. That last surely needs expansion. The divorce rate is going up like a rocket. Attempts to stop it by making divorce more difficult are reminiscent of the Chamberlain era state of mind—if you look the other way perhaps it will disappear. Fed on that diet, Hitler's Germany burst right out of its britches. The same thing would happen with the divorce rate. Putting a bandage on a cancer is not much good; the thing has to be opened up and treated.

The stabilization of marriage will have to be worked at the other way round. The attempts to do so by making divorce more difficult are simply repetitions of the ancient doctrine that man is naturally a vile creature and his wickedness must be kept in check by force. Side by side goes the equally ancient dogma that

man's institutions, among them marriage, are not really his own at all but have in some way been given to him. He ought to be properly grateful for them and, indeed, to start monkeying around with them is wrong, or, in a crescendo screech, downright sacrilegious.

Let us agree that if the social institution of marriage is going to be preserved, something has got to be done about it. When we get to the point where one in three marriages is destined to end in divorce, when girls not yet out of their twenties have already changed partners four times, you may call it by the same name but clearly it is becoming something different.

If we are going to continue the bringing up of children in families, we will have to find some solution to the divorce problem. It may be that we can work out alternative ways of bringing up youngsters, but up to this date there is no good alternative to a disorganized family but a well-integrated one. The children's homes, orphanages, and institutions are doing a far better job than they did, and could do a still better one if we could give them the personnel (numbers and training) that they need. Indeed, it may well be that the massive drift of employment from industrial production to services may result in enough of the right people, properly trained, being available; but, as yet, that is far from the case. No house mother, no kindergarten teacher, no matter how all-embracing her devotion, elastic her heart, and prehensile her mother love, can present herself in forty different ways to meet the needs of forty different personalities. True, nature did outfit some women to reproduce themselves a dozen times and even a few over but never forty.

What can be done? Has social inventiveness nothing to offer? We can start off by saying that what we will aim at is better marriages, and anticipate from this fewer divorces, rather than insist upon fewer divorces and perpetuate marriages which are unhappy, damaging to husband and wife, and downright dangerous to the personalities of the children.

During the last half century we have demanded with increasing

insistence better doctors, better lawyers, nurses, policemen, teachers, secretaries. Almost the only paid jobs for which we do not insist upon more and more preliminary training and experience are those of running our kitchens and running the government. With these notable exceptions, the people who are going to manipulate the relations and issues of our lives have to know as much as possible about their fields before we let them start.

Now there is nothing in our lives which is as much a test of our capacity to manage interpersonal relations as marriage. Yet we let adolescents, whom we wouldn't trust to direct traffic at Main and Elm, start in to run this relationship which is so difficult that about one out of three break down. We provide him, and her, with no preliminary information, and indeed expose them to ideas about human nature which are dead, dangerous, and destructive.

Why should they not have as a preparation for marriage reasonably workable concepts of human nature? We still talk rather self-consciously of teaching the facts of life—why not the facts of living?

Lectures on living should be a part of the regular school curriculum from the grade classes on up. If they only put a stop to the erroneous and dangerous things which the child does learn more or less incidentally, they would make living a great deal less difficult. If they put a stop to the parrot cry of the reactionary's—"You can't change human nature," and to the bloodthirsty "Eye for an eye, and tooth for a tooth" concept, they would make it a lot easier for us to get ahead. If they silenced the dangerous ultra-nationalist teaching which leaves every little boy and girl around the world with the conviction that, by some extraordinarily fortunate chance, he and she have been born into the most important country on earth, that its citizens are stronger and more silent, are better talkers, are tougher and gentler, smarter, shrewder and more generous, and can spit farther than those of any other country, and that the inhabitants of all the other countries are just "furriners" and naturally no good, they

would have made a contribution of almost limitless significance.

Through such courses in the schools we actually can do a great deal more than just a housecleaning job, essential though that is. We can show the child and the adolescent the intricate interplay of inheritance and experience in modifying human behavior. We can bring out the basic motivations, the difference between the things that really matter to men and the things that interested parties claim ought to matter. We can show the curbs, the incentives, and the potentialities and limits of man's abilities. Already we can make some fairly accurate statements concerning the way in which different kinds of personality are going to react to various situations. We can teach the child and the adolescent to recognize the dangerous, the sick, and the half-sick personalities. After all, we do warn our youngsters to avoid the open fire, the electric light socket, the truck driver, rotten ice, and deep water. Why not teach them to recognize and avoid the chronically insecure, the sadist, the psychopathic liar, the mother-fixated boy who could never take on the part of a husband?

It is extraordinary to what an extent the framework of marriage can be distorted. There is the couple, not unexpectedly childless, who run a marriage in which the husband has to visit his mother every day; he has to refer all his major and most of his minor decisions to her. If he does not, he at once begins to suffer from his guilt feelings; they sit on his chest in a very real sense of the word, for his heart begins to pound and he has pains which have taken him to one cardiologist after another in a vain search for a heart disease which exists only in the psychological sense. There is the middle-aged accountant who, from early boyhood on, was profoundly attached to his mother and equally profoundly frustrated by her, and who, in consequence, has developed a sort of Casanova pattern in his relations with women. His marriage a complete failure, he entered into one relationship after another, each lasting three or four weeks, and after a twenty-year period, his experiences reached almost astronomical figures. Eventually he settled down with a woman who assumed

some of the maternal role, but not enough to raise his feelings of guilt as had his wife.

Few things are at once more absurd and more tragic than the girl, almost totally inexperienced in living, who sets out to reform the chronic psychopath by marrying him and giving him the love and affection which, she is sure, is the one thing that he needs. Human nature does change and can be changed all right, but, like any other living thing, the longer it has been growing in one direction the harder it will be to change it. So, if the person you have in mind to change by simple devotion is one who habitually brought home reports from school—or tore them up—to the effect that he didn't attend, that he stole the petty cash out of the teacher's desk, and beat up the younger boys, if during his adolescence he ran away from home, if his parents could never believe him, and he got his name inscribed in the records of the juvenile court, if in his young manhood he couldn't hold a job because he was too smart or because, as he claims, he never got the "breaks" that the others did, then, lady, turn and run!

Here is no proposal for a revolutionary renovation of marriage, but a simple, logical extension of an already existing trend towards the proper preparation for carrying out the major responsibilities of society. One proviso must be added, and, for some, this may well be the joker, for it is that those who do the teaching must themselves be forward-looking people trained and experienced in the modern knowledge concerning human nature which has been assembled so rapidly that much of it has come into our possession within our own lifetimes. What they teach must not be some ancient and outworn series of concepts, but the latest and best we know.

Inventions are needed not only in the shape of new social tools but, and this is perhaps the most provocative of all, in our tool making machinery. We can see right before us, almost from one issue of the morning paper to the next, the formation of inventions in the field of research itself.

The master invention is the gradual dimming in, the solidifica-

tion, of the outlines of the concept of research as a function of organized society. This is new. For, since the wintry March day when Bacon caught his death of cold seeing whether a snowdrift could be used as a refrigerator to arrest mortification in a hen, through Koch's lonely years of struggle to break into a new world down what must often have seemed the rather unlikely avenue of his crude microscope, up to the very recent decades, research has been the occupation of the solitary worker, rarely rewarded save in the coin of intellectual satisfaction.

Indeed, the researcher and inventor have usually been looked at with a good deal of hostility. They introduced change, they broke up the settled way of doing things, their ideas marched ruthlessly across too many toes—Galileo turned the universe right side up and must often have wished that he hadn't; Pasteur spent some of his best years fighting bigots; Freud, for all his attainments, never received academic recognition.

Now it is different. The new ways of thinking about research started with the realization that the first few brilliant advances in industrial engineering and production could not be properly followed up unless the business of improvement and invention was put on an organized basis. First was the German Reichsans-talt; and then, after much talking, deploring, and the pointing out of the head start that Germany was getting, the National Physical Laboratory, after a distinctly delayed labor, came to a tardy birth at a cost of £5,479. Shortly after this the Bureau of Standards was set up.

In rapid succession the larger industries established research departments or made use of central institutes. The collaboration between the Mellon Institute and the steel industry is classic. By the time the 1929 depression came around, the value of the research department as a means of opening up new markets was so well recognized that it was often the last department forced to take a cut in its budget. The sums soared by the year.

Dupont, at their Deepwater Plant, expended forty-three million dollars over an eighteen-year period before they covered

their investment on nylon; and, to date, the two billion expended in the organized research necessary to develop the atomic bomb represents the extent to which we have been prepared to direct resources to research.

As is true of taxation, lies, and guinea pigs, one thing leads to another in the organizing of research. The more new processes and techniques and, ultimately, products that we turn out, the more our economy anticipates them, and, indeed, tends to become based upon the probability that they will continue to appear.

Things are not built to last the way that great-grandfather's house and travelling trunks and pewter beer mugs were. Who wants a house to last a hundred years, when the next decade may bring windowless buildings or one-way windows, precipitrons to get rid of pollen and dust and bacteria, air conditioning for everyone and automatic heat control? Who wants ox-hide suitcases, about as heavy as their contents and guaranteed to last for twenty-five years, when air travel demands lightness and when tomorrow may bring underclothes, if not outer clothing, that may be discarded and replaced everywhere as easily as we do tissue handkerchiefs? Why insist on ponderous sets of heavy china, when home entertainment is being revamped and when individual throw-away cups and plates are clearly coming in?

Gradually we are becoming aware of the fact that we are half way into a society which is based upon the probability of change, and on the way out of a society which, like that of the Indians until we arrived, was based upon the apparent certainty of permanence.

As this becomes more clearly recognized, we are going to see research take its place as a function of organized modern society in the same sense that education, transportation, and money are functions of organized society. We cannot imagine a modern society without these last three functions; a modern industrial society is no longer possible without organized research.

We need it not simply to keep going the flood of new things

that are enlarging our lives and providing means of bringing them to quick and unpleasant ends, but—and this is far more important—we need it desperately to give us the answer to the dislocations spreading like cracks in the spring ice all throughout our social structure as a result of industrialization, increased speed of communication, and transportation.

What uses are we going to make of the enormously increased leisure time that is just around the corner? How are we going to run a society in which the greater number of the adults will be post-menopausal? And again and again and again, what are we going to do about hostility interpersonal, intergroup and international, the managing of which is the most appalling necessity of all?

This may seem somewhat far away from the tribulations of the citizen struggling into his socks on a damp morning, or his female counterpart struggling out of the streetcar against onrushing tides of humanity. So it is, and so it isn't. It's just as far away as financing the chlorination of the city water supply and just as close as your own youngest dying of typhoid because the city council that you helped put in never thought of doing anything about the reservoir or couldn't agree on the man to give the contract to.

If we can get the machinery going, we can have answers where at present we have only guesses—and most of them wrong. We want to get the answers to all kinds of things about human beings but not only about their behavior. We want answers to "coronary" heart disease which stops men dead or damaged, often apparently in the full swing of their vigor. We can beat out of our bodies most of our parasites with such an array of weapons that the new barely has a chance to be fully developed before the newer makes its formal appearance in the medical journals and its informal highlighted showing in headlines, radio and movie. But we do not have the answers to degenerative diseases, the creeping killjoys of our later years, the diseases of our arteries, of brain and heart, of kidney and liver.



We have no answers to give the wife of the clergyman who, in mid-career, begins to forget to turn up for the marriage service, eventually forgets how the service should run, and who now introduces aimless and pointless reminiscences into his discussions of parish affairs. We may talk puzzlingly about presbyphrenia and we may enlighten the alarmed lady in almost useless degree by saying that it means that her husband is suffering from a premature aging of his brain. That is about as far as we can go.

True enough, men are working here and there in dozens or perhaps scores of centers on just these problems—maybe a couple of men in each, maybe ten. Even if we say that around the whole globe there may be several hundred places where men are trying to work out some answers to these questions, what of it? The facts answer very flatly that it is not enough. We have the resources; men are pouring back from the already won struggle for enough to eat, to wear, to keep us warm. The battles for production are over, the machinery needs only an occupying force. We are standing on the edge of a re-deployment, a deployment into organized efforts to expand the business of living.

Hammering out the working concepts which will gear research as a function of organized modern society may sound remote, but it's a job that's as close to home as getting answers for the trained nurse who has lost touch with her profession in years of service as a companion in a luxurious home, lost her relatives over the last decade by death and distance, and now has lost her job. In mid-passage of a depression she insists that she would rather suffer anything than this; she would rather die and tries to. We do have some answers, crude, elementary, empiric, in shock therapies. But among all the men busily clicking the switches of electric shock machines every morning across the country, how many are engaged in research on the problem of the pathological depression? A handful. How many are on full time? Probably not one, unless this is an exceptional year and someone has got a fellowship.

Why is this? Because the men with the training and experience to start getting these answers must eat and even sleep. Most research work on human behavior starts when the forty-hour week stops. It is done by people who are doing other jobs—teaching, administration, therapy, consulting. It is done by tired people, short of help and equipment. There are a few exceptional centers that are beginning to be well equipped, but these are extremely few and will not grow, save slowly, until our basic concepts of the place of research in modern society have been changed.

They are changing with every additional demand for information about why we behave as we do, or don't behave as we'd like to or as our friends say we ought to. The receptionist who has lost one job after another because she gets mad at the customers and eventually concludes that there must be something that can be done about herself, contributes to the pressure for change. The citizen's committee which, after deploring and exhorting, decides that promoting the juvenile court might help the epidemic of window breaking, is adding its weight. The mother who wants to know why her five-year-old retires to a corner, sucks his thumb, and pulls his hair by the hour, the government officials who want to know what can be done to alter the disastrously dangerous trends in German culture, the personnel directors who are grappling helplessly with rising hostility among plant employees everywhere, the wife who can't figure out her own frigidity, you and I coming up against problems of human relations every hour throughout the day to which there are no answers except windy placebos, are inching research inexorably into its place as a function of modern society.

How can it be geared onto the main drive shafts of our society? How can the pressure of men, money, and materials be led into it—pressure such as we organized to build Boulder Dam, the Willow Run bomber plant or to set up the North Atlantic convoy system? One of the main supports of research in the last four decades has been the large philanthropic foundations. So perva-

sive has been their assistance that it requires something of an effort to see that they arose as the result of an accident, or at least stray incident, in the historic process, one that was both quite local in occurrence and quite unlikely to be repeated.

Up until about the end of the nineteenth century endowments of this nature were small, such as those set up by Franklin and by Peabody. With the growth of enormous personal fortunes which resulted from the opening up of the western areas of the North American continent and with the rapidly expanding internal market provided by the pouring immigrant floods of the last decades of the nineteenth and the first of the twentieth century, numerous large foundations were set up. Later, fewer and less heavily endowed structures appeared in Britain. They did not, and could not, arise in most of the other world areas—in China, India, Russia, or South America. They were essentially the products of extremely rapid industrialization taking place in democratic societies in which individualism was still strong.

The limits set on personal wealth by taxation, anti-trust legislation and the extension of government into business are bringing down the curtain upon this phase.

It is not a matter of what is to take their place. Important, and indeed vital, though their contributions have been to the promotion of knowledge during the last half century, and vast though their resources would have seemed to the early eighteenth and nineteenth century experimenters and inventors, their position has already become that of a pilot plant in relation to the resources that the Western governments poured into research during World War II. You see them as Trevithick's first locomotive, with its six-foot boiler and single cylinder, set against the pulling power of the four thousand seven hundred horsepower unit that hauls the Twentieth Century Limited.

The new status of research as one of the functions of society has been steadily taking form during the last two or three decades. Industry as one of the most sensitive reactors of our culture is beginning what seems likely to be a partnership which will lead

to most dynamic results. In the totalitarian countries research is becoming a state function. The rapid advance of the dye and chemical industry in Germany in the era of the Kaisers, the appearance of the arsenical treatment of syphilis, got their financial support mainly from the state.

There is a place for intermeshings of this kind. Industry and government must, and will, keep much of the research machinery turning, expanding, and evolving for as far over the decades as we can see.

But there must be still another relationship between research and society, for whoever controls research controls tomorrow. Congressional enquiries and enterprising reporters have turned up far too many instances where new discoveries and inventions have been kept off the market by industries having a heavy investment in current techniques and processes. The difference between the progress made in the botanical and metallurgical sciences on the one hand and the social sciences on the other in Soviet Russia is too apparent, the failure of scientific research in Japan and its progressive sterilization in Nazi Germany stand out too clearly, for us to feel that the control of research, and especially research in the social sciences, should ever be allowed to fall into the hands of a political party interested in its own perpetuation.

If research is to acquire full status as a function of society, it must be a partner and not an employee. It must have a seat at the planning board, it must have a position guaranteed and preserved as we struggle to preserve and guarantee equality before the law, freedom of speech, and the rights of habeas corpus.

How that is to be set up is crucial. It is not impossible. We have succeeded at least in defining the ideal of courts independent of political and financial manipulation. With that precedent it should not be impossible to work out the concepts necessary for setting up research institutions financed by society but protected, by public opinion crystallized into law, against political or other manipulation. This is supremely necessary since the

things which we shall have to tackle in the next few decades are certain to arouse the most bitter opposition. »

I have come back again and again to the problem of the dangerous rise in hostility between groups, to the amount of anxiety which is present in modern societies, to the ancient problem of the taboos, the not-to-be-thought-about, the not-to-be-worked-out, the to-be-preserved-at-all-costs, to the centuries-long breakdown in the moralistic design of living which is now reaching visible momentum as it approaches its last stages.

I return to them as does everyone who thinks about tomorrow. We ponder these razor-edge questions in the fragments of time that we can snatch. They break in with the inevitability of the telephone on a busy morning. They are an insistent and rising distraction. They clamor for answer. The number of us who can ignore them is thinning out, though there is still a majority who can stuff up their ears with cotton wool cliches, who can insulate their minds with taboos or who, with that endearing ingenuity of our species, can entertain two or more completely contradictory concepts at the same time without apparent discomfort.

But deal with them as we will, they are there. They don't just stand around us, large, vague, pen-and-ink postulates; they keep pressing in on us as flesh and blood problems for decision. They are red and vivid with the certainty that until those decisions are worked out, they will take even more blood and flesh—our own, our friends', our sons'—than they have through the grisly years of this most modern century. They are there in the little encounters of the hour and in our personal tragedies, they shout through the newspapers, they whisper in rural gossip.

They are there in the hostility, the suspicions which sweep the office staff, the certainty that management is putting something over; they break out in bloody form in strikes; they sweep national groups in waves of aggressive antagonism against others, against their fellows grouped around other national flags. You can see the fear of that hostility in the way we have met the discovery of atomic power, the refusal to think of the logical con-

sequences, the quick relief with which statements that a defence has been found are met, the equally quick fear that belief in these defences will mislead us into the false confidence of another Munich, the determination to keep the secret which is so palpably no secret, the equal urgency to share the control. We have a dozen contending plans, each loaded with the desperate immediacy of our fear of the hostility of people towards each other.

You can see modern anxiety on this vast scale; you can see it in the cold hands and hesitations of the girl who works in your office and struggles to reconcile the modern world with the traits and values which have been built up within her in her childhood; you can see it in the stomach ulcers of the fellow next door, in the breakup of Cousin Joe's marriage to his insecure and nagging wife. You can see it, obscured by a mist of erroneous values, in the over-precise, the excessively conscientious, the punctilious and meticulous people who crowd into the safe jobs and who, because of these very qualities, work their way up to responsibility that they can't take and then break out into a multiplicity of ailments to plague their lives and their wives.

To all these—the hostilities, the anxieties, the tremendous breakup in our design of living—there is no recourse save in more knowledge, more social inventions. No existing knowledge, no application of earlier working concepts can meet the situation, can undertake not only the new building but the difficult, dangerous, and painful tasks of clearing away designs of living, modifying social institutions, and pulling out ways of thinking that have persisted long past their time to become the major dangers of our days.

## CHAPTER VIII

### *THE PRICE OF MYTHS*

MYTHS ARE THINGS WHICH OTHER PEOPLE BELIEVE. THIS IS A comfortable thought; it fits snugly into the mind. It was an unexceptional and therefore respectable member of our household of concepts in those days before people began to look reflectively and anxiously at the kingpin idea of the existence of absolute truths. These last few decades have seen this key concept levered up from its bed and submitted to as much prying and probing and testing as those aroused people who lived in its shelter could not fend off. So now the assertion that myths are things other people believe has become a bit of an intellectual hangnail.

The name calling of the modern class wars has rubbed it up until it stands out as a throbbing hot issue. For, if capitalists have their folklore, Communists their dogma, nations their traditions (let alone such monstrosities as a national physics, mathematics or psychiatry), and even the learned professions have their rituals, who then can be saved?

We are beginning, with our usual reluctance, to look not at the next fellow but at ourselves. Can it be that we, too, are hosts to myths, myths as pervasive and parasitic as the bugs in the beds of our Elizabethan ancestors? It's a sound bet that what everyone else has, we have too—whether it's a dislike of going to the dentist, a conviction of the necessity of taking a periodic bath, or a lurk-

ing belief that our real capacities are not properly understood. If everyone else holds onto beliefs in a number of things that are clearly and demonstrably not so, then there is something more than a probability that some of our own are just as not so.

So we finally arrive at the picture of people "living in error," as it used to be called; often, indeed, being heartily encouraged to do so by those who profit from it.

What are myths? How did we get them in the first place? We can start off on our myth-hunt by saying that at one time each and every myth was a valid truth. It constituted the most accurate statement possible on the basis of the facts which existed at the time of its origin. It was actually what, with our weakness for the absolute, we are fond of calling the truth.

Unfortunately for the truth-about-to-be-a-myth, no such thing as absolute truth exists, or, not to fall into the misuse of the absolute ourselves, let us say that no such thing as absolute truth has ever been demonstrated. What we mean by the truth is simply the most efficient statement of what we know about a matter. In the last analysis, it states what we can be expected to do in a given situation. Hence, a truth is, in actuality, a working concept.

If we say that potatoes are good to eat, it is reasonable to expect that at some time or other we may be found eating potatoes. If we say that there's a devil in every glass, the certainty that we won't drink the contents is, unfortunately, not so great but if we really consider that to be the truth, we will at least make some attempt, no matter how feeble, not to drink. If we assert the bloody and dreadful truth that we have got to have a world government or end in a blast of atomic flame, then you may be sure that there will be plenty of attempts to form one. If we fail, it will not be because we do not believe this to be true, but that failure, if it comes, will be in part the price we have to pay for keeping our myths.

Yesterday's truth is constantly being modified in the light of today's new facts. This is a process which is going on unceasingly



in every aspect of our lives. The sun was once the eye of a god, and at another time a lantern hung in the sky. Not so long ago it was a greatly expanded ball of fire. Now it is matter in the process of atomic breakdown. For our grandfather, thrift was a virtue. Now, with our need to maintain a high demand for goods if production is to be kept up and employment maintained, our ideas of thrift have to be restated.

Sometimes, however, there are hold-ups; the process of conversion fails to work. Yesterday's beliefs continue to appear in the world of today. The facts which should have altered or destroyed them exist. Often, indeed, these facts lie right beside the beliefs, but something has come in the way of the process whereby these new facts should have taken their rightful place.

This is the genesis of the myth. Myths are yesterday's truths; they are the working concepts of an earlier, less informed time which have persisted into our day—dead ideas that rot the living. Their supporting facts have been destroyed; they are no longer our best working statements, our best plans for action; but, enfeebled though they may be, they are still loaded with enough social force to hurt and destroy, to frustrate the new and growing knowledge. Their force depends upon the number of people who still believe in them, upon how dangerously close they lie to the main drive shafts of our lives. If you want to believe that buttermilk or the dew of a May morning is good for your complexion, no great harm is likely to come of it, even to your complexion. But if you want to believe—and there are plenty of us who do—that people whose names end in a "u" or a "z" are inherently inferior to those whose names end in a "t" or an "n," there is likely to be plenty more of the same kind of trouble that we have now, trouble that will end only with the end of some of us.

Myths are not the exclusive possession of any group or class. They are to be found anywhere. They are more frequently found, of course, in groups who are not in close contact with the stream of modern knowledge or in those whose interests are

directed to the past rather than to the future. Very naturally, myths persist and flourish most actively in authoritarian social institutions. It is the nature of such institutions to resist change, to deny new knowledge. Authoritarianism lives on absolutes. The idea of truths which are continually being altered, extended, and made more effective in the light of new facts is more damaging to them than D.D.T.

Here, then, we have one of the main explanations of the origin of myths, or, perhaps more clearly stated, the persistence of yesterday's truths. In our long history, as we know, power and prestige have passed from one social group to another. At one time they rested in the hands of kings, later they passed to great landowners, still later to the industrialists and now they seem likely to be taken over by the bureaucracies.

During each such period, working concepts were developed which served as the clearest possible statement of the state of affairs existing at the time. In the great days of the monarchical system, kings were prepared to part with their heads—and did—rather than with the myth of the divine right to rule. The period of the landowners' dominance was one in which beliefs concerning social differences between classes in the social hierarchy were vital things. It was the time of forelock pulling and "young Master John," of the cad and the bounder, the symbolism of the walking stick, the gloves, and the monocle. It began to fade out with the invasion of the rich soap-boilers, the industries that demanded brains no matter at what hierarchical level they might be found. It died with the death duties.

The group which is enjoying the power and the prestige which the prevalence of a series of beliefs confers upon it quite frequently succeeds in maintaining the survival and potency of those beliefs for long periods after all factual basis has been removed from them. Indeed, only too often such beliefs have come to an end only by violence and bloodshed and the destruction of those who held them.

Such, then, is the origin of some of the great myths of our time. Social institutions were founded upon them at an earlier period when they were vital and valid. Such institutions fight with all the tenacity and cunning of living creatures to protect the myth on which they live. When it dies, they die.

Myths persist, of course, for other reasons as well. Sometimes, like flies in amber, they get into a larger emotional reaction. Like the fly, they are surrounded and protected against the wear and tear, the steady attrition of daily events and, hence, are preserved. This is particularly true of the little personalized myths. There is the man who, as a boy, was rejected and frustrated by his mother who saw in him the chief obstacle to a separation from a husband whom she hated. The boy grew up to believe that all women were basically self-seeking; you couldn't trust them; on the surface they might seem friendly, enticing, and generous enough, but sooner or later they would let you down.

To balance this is the girl dominated by her frigid mother who, unceasingly at odds with her husband, drills into her daughter that all men are brutes, that you have to look out for them, that they have no interest in you as a person, that they are out for their own satisfaction and, having got it, may not even bother to say good-bye. Not unnaturally, the girl grows up with beliefs about men which, with all allowances for their admitted defects, simply are not so.

The beliefs which this man and woman hold are unhappy enough things in themselves. What makes them really serious is the fact that they are protected by an emotional glaze laid on them when they were formed. This glaze was laid on in the emotional fires fed by the fear and the hostility aroused during their childhood; fires which, in the girl's case, were fed by all the intricate feelings of loyalty and devotion which her mother, in search of affection and consolation, had aroused.

So fixed and protected are these individual myths that they

can, and do, endure all through life. Indeed, it is often hard to modify them even when all the resources of modern psychotherapy are brought to bear.

On a much larger scale are the emotionally protected national myths. At this hour it is a little difficult to determine the precise number of sovereign states, since some of them are still in the process of being swallowed up by their neighbors. But we can anticipate that at least fifty will survive. It is an interesting thing, but deadly, that the inhabitants of each are very likely to consider that, by an unusually fortunate series of happenings, they have been born in the best country, the most virile, the most noble and stirring, the most worthy of devotion and self-sacrifice. This might be looked at with the benevolent smile we give to little boys who profess a similar enthusiasm for their own schools when they compare them with the dreary heaps that their friends attend. But it is not the same thing. The boys have larger, overriding loyalties that bring them together—the neighborhood, their town, and, at the worst, there are parents to smack their heads together if school rivalries get too hot. The national rivalries are far more deadly things.

The larger loyalty to a world state, the idea of a coming world citizenship, is just taking form. It may get here before the third World War, but hopes are dimming. It may succeed in growing up out of the ruins left by the next convulsion, though it would seem that the ruins left by atomic explosions are likely to be smaller and fewer than those left by the old chemical explosions of the early 1940's. In the meantime, from such organization as the mutual suspicions and jealousies of the sovereign states has permitted, there has been conspicuously omitted any authority to smack heads together. No world police force has been set up, and without it there is no world organization, no world order, nothing save the naked power of sovereign states armed to the teeth and waiting for the first move. The myths stand against humanity in tragic stature.

Besides emotionally protected beliefs, other patterns of think-

ing which were acquired during our earliest years show a truly remarkable resistance to modification by later knowledge. This is a fact well known to, and capitalized upon by, all authoritarian social institutions, clerical and political, which are concerned with the preservation of their own authority.

These are some of the explanations for the infestation of our social body with myths which weaken, inhibit, and frustrate us. They afford opportunity for individuals and groups to exploit us to their own ends. They stand in the way of progress; they limit our happiness and our effectiveness. Within this last century we have set up means to rid ourselves of many harmful things—the dangerous bacteria, the parasites, and the pests. It does not seem too difficult to set about removing from our social life myths which have been infinitely more potent for harm than any living pest has been.

We can't look, or at least we can't all look together, at all the myths. Some of us couldn't stand it, and some of the pages have to be skipped. Certain beliefs have been so cunningly worked into the minds of far too many of us that we can't bear to have them touched. It would hurt too much. They have been threaded into our most inward beliefs of what we are, what we stand for. Even to make a movement towards examining them, let alone trying to draw them out, no matter how gently, is to threaten the whole personality. We can look, however, at some of the less controversial myths, those which are already in the process of being discarded, and which, for that reason, are more amenable to detached consideration.

There is a series of beliefs concerning women which were widely held up to the end of the nineteenth century. These beliefs, which are still preserved by some groups and individuals, are now being abandoned, but are still sufficiently potent to cause some degree of difficulty and confusion.

Specially dear to the hearts of men has been the myth of women as creatures of lesser intellectual capacity. This belief characteristically was expressed in its most brash form in a

publication brought out in the last decade of the nineteenth century by one of the German professorate, and was entitled *The Congenital Feeble-Mindedness of Women*.

It is clear that during centuries in which a capacity for heavy physical labor was essential not only for success but for survival, women were in a position of relative inferiority to men. This was true where the heavy labor was applied to farming or fighting. Her inability to compete in this field was, moreover, intensified by the size of the family. A woman who spent a considerable part of her active life pregnant or recovering from pregnancy was in no position to compete with her lord and master.

After listening to the exhausted evening cries of the modern city canyon dweller over the perfectly appalling day she has put in with pre-school Jo or Joe, how impossible it all is, how she couldn't stand another day like today, how she is losing her mind, her looks, and her hair, one wonders about Great-Grandmother Priscilla who almost ran out of names for the products of the hours, or was it minutes, that she and Ezekiel somehow managed to snatch together. Post-World War II Priscilla is, they say, one-and-a-quarter inches taller, has longer fingers, is one inch broader around the hips, three-quarters around the bust, and weighs five pounds more. It takes more to feed and less to cover her. What's the answer?

Developments in our modern period have cast an entirely new light upon women's capacities. The growth of industrialization in the western world has brought leisure time and also a demand for progressively more competent and trained workers. The ideals of education for all have been put into actual practice. The fact that industry has drawn the population into the cities and, therefore, into less spacious dwellings, and the fact that a large family is no longer the asset that it was when there was a tremendous demand for hand and foot power on the farm, have resulted in considerable diminution in the size of the family. Finally, as industrialization of work has progressed, the proportion of it which can be designated as heavy labor has been steadily

decreasing. Many procedures and operations which formerly required great strength and endurance can now be carried out by automatic processes. These three great social events play into each other's hands as far as woman are concerned.

Once the education of all women had been assured and co-educational schools had begun to appear, it became clear that, at least in this sphere, women would easily hold their own. Indeed, their greater conscientiousness and application to detail often resulted in their excelling their competitors—a fact very mortifying to hearty little boys who, up to the time they went to school, had got considerable pleasure out of the obviously feeble incompetence of their sisters. It is true that those few favored women who, down the centuries, received educational opportunities equal to those of the men of their time have had little difficulty in demonstrating their capacity. Until modern times, however, they had been considered exceptional, and not infrequently their success was attributed, by their complacent male contemporaries, to the fact that they had the "mind of a man."

The second of the three great social changes which has served to destroy the myth of woman's intellectual inferiority—the urbanization of the population and the conversion of the large family from an asset to a liability—has freed a considerable number of women for whole or part-time work outside the home. At first this work took the form of mere developments and expansions of what they had been doing in the home: nursing the general population in place of Johnny's belly-ache; waitress work for the public instead of for the family males; domestic work (the most detested, because you were just exchanging the job of fixing up your own dirty dishes and rumpled beds for that of fixing up someone else's); and acting as an assistant, indirect manipulator, confidant, pacifier, and gratifier to the boss of the organization, as a secretary.

The demands of the first World War for more labor brought women into innumerable jobs which hitherto had been the sole

prerogative of man. They did them very well, and, since it was still stoutly believed that they were man's inferior, they were paid less. Hence their popularity as a source of inexpensive labor continued to rise, and the extent of their employment grew proportionately. At this time there was a great rash of complaints in the newspapers and public meetings about the unfairness of single women living at home and undercutting men in the labor market. The married woman who held a job came in for special censure, particularly during the era of the economy of scarcity, when, though there was an enormous amount of work waiting to be done, there was, amazing though it may be, a complete lack of jobs for many millions of people.

The last barriers in the labor market are now being broken down by the process of the lightening of labor to which we have already referred. During World War II there was a still further acceleration of the invasion of the labor field by women. Their capacity to learn and deal with complicated procedures has been demonstrated beyond all question. Everywhere their status is changing rapidly. All around the earth they are coming out from behind triple-bound traditions, veils, harem doors, and five layers of woollens to take their place in the modern world. It has always been understood that even the simplest of women had an opinion, but since it has been demonstrated that the opinion is backed up by a mind at least as good as that of their former lord and master, no sound reason has been found for refusing them the right to participate in choosing the government. The difficulty has been to understand why women persist in choosing men for this work. In almost every area where free and secret balloting exists, women are in a large enough majority to put in an entirely female government. But they don't, and the answer is still speculative.

It is true that other myths concerning the inadequacy of women still exist, which may account, at least in part, for this curious preference by even the most assertive of feminists for the male to do all kinds of jobs for her that one of her own sex could



do just as well, at least technically: give her legal advice, examine her sinus, stomach, or psyche, paint her house, design her clothes, even fix her hair. Part of this, of course, is due to the immense momentum of cultural concepts that carries them on regardless of whether they are alive or dead.

What are these other myths concerning the inadequacy of women? First, that her health is not sufficiently robust to allow her to take part in industry, and second—especially consoling to the outstripped male—that, although she may do well enough in the sheltered situation afforded by the school, college, and community, she cannot compete on equal terms with men in situations which call for initiative, constructive imagination, and inventiveness.

The statements concerning the health hazard which she presents may, at first, appear to be well justified. Records of absence of women from work due to illness have been high, particularly among women on production jobs as contrasted with those engaged in such jobs as secretarial work and clerking. Indeed, it is most suspicious that it is precisely in those jobs which had always been considered too heavy for women that the most sickness absenteeism occurs. Anyone who has carried out experimental work knows that where his predictions are fully confirmed by the results obtained, he had better double check. Such jobs as that of rivetting or operating a speed hammer result in an unusual amount of sickness in women, just as everyone who claimed that women were delicate creatures, rather mysteriously set up inside, said they would.

As a step in understanding this, let us look at some myths very ancient but still active as underground workers. They relate to the status of women during menstruation. Beliefs concerning the special condition of women during menstruation are of the greatest antiquity, and, indeed, some of them persist unaltered in the thinking of those primitive cultures which still exist in the more unorganized parts of our world. They continue in considerably modified form in our own times and cultures.

In earlier times, and among contemporary primitive native groups in Australia, New Guinea and Sumatra, women were, and are, considered to be in a specially vulnerable state during menstruation and also considered to be dangerous to others. During this time the woman is forbidden to enter into the usual life of her community. Many of the prohibitions are extreme. Some communities forbade her to go near the fish-yards, to cross the game paths, to use the communal washing grounds, or even to show her face. These extraordinary measures, which are reproduced in identical or similar forms in primitive communities from one end of the world to the other, and from the beginning of time until the present day, reveal the widespread nature of the belief that women, during the menstrual period, are in an unusual state.

Alongside these beliefs, the contentions of our culture during the nineteenth century that women, during menstruation, had to take special precautions with their daily routine, appear quite mild and almost commonplace. It was asserted that, at such times, women were especially likely to be upset, to swoon, faint, run upstairs to have a good cry, or lie down with a "headache," which was usually located in the abdomen, that they must be expected to be anxious-minded, irritable, and apt to speak their minds.

These beliefs are, nonetheless, almost equally inaccurate, and, since the absenteeism of women on the grounds of illness tends to rise sharply during their menstrual periods, an understanding of the part played by menstruation myths is important in dealing with the question of the fitness of women for industrial life. Recent work in the field of absenteeism among women around the time of their menstrual periods has shown that the establishment of an educational program directed at dealing with these myths will, if properly maintained, result in a considerable reduction in the number of days spent away from work. Let us hasten to add that there can be disturbances in health at these times, based, for example, on some endocrine dysfunction, but they appear to

account for only a small fraction of the great volume of complaints.

It seems probable that the same results could be obtained by a similar campaign directed at dealing with the erroneous beliefs held by women concerning their fitness for industry. In other words, if the beliefs that the woman has a "more delicate nervous system" than the man, that her structure as a potential mother produces in her a mysterious vulnerability to the harsh shocks and strains of a business world, could be screened out of their everyday concepts, then it is extremely probable that much of their sickness absenteeism would subside. Woman has, of course, obvious limitations with respect to the man. She is smaller, lighter, and less capable of bursts of powerful effort. In certain operations, however, her smallness and her lighter weight are actual assets. Perhaps a more serious handicap to her success in industry is the fact that our cultural pattern still holds out homemaking as the primary objective for most women. Under these circumstances, the incentive to succeed in her job and to make plans for long distance goals must be less than in the case of the man. Here, too, we note a period of transition. Increasing numbers of women are combining marriage with careers. The new pattern is by no means clear. No solutions to the problems of child raising and management of the home have been worked out for this growing group of women.

Still another series of myths concerning women is fast disappearing. These asserted that she was incapable of experiencing sexual satisfaction. During the heyday of their existence they caused great unhappiness, and even now they occasionally appear, handed down through some particularly ill-informed family group. These myths were associated with a period of excessive sexual repression which reached its greatest intensity about the middle of the nineteenth century. The progressive fading out of these repressive codes is the other side of the seesaw to the growing economic independence of women. Money in your pocket is freedom—to choose, to think for yourself. Take the money out

of our pockets and over the generations our freedom is taken away, as all social hierarchies and totalitarian governments know.

In order to secure conformity to this rigid code, sexual behavior was described in moralistic terms. By pronunciamento, it was unfit for discussion. It was commonly asserted to be disgusting and loathsome, and the belief finally evolved that the sexual relation was something which men enjoyed but women entered into only as part of their wifely duty.

Under this smothering myth, the amount of frigidity in women rose to an astonishing extent. Even as late as the nineteenth century eminent medical men could deliver themselves of the assertion that a normal woman was incapable of deriving any pleasure or satisfaction in the sexual relationship. We can still see the process at work, though to a much more limited degree, in the children of over-anxious parents, and can make some estimate of the extent of the unhappiness and frustration in marriage which must have resulted when this frigidity was more widespread.

There is another group of myths that we can look at without anyone beginning to howl, at least very loudly. These are the "will-power" myths. They stick out in the jutting chin of the Nordic hero—a body type which modern endocrinology is beginning to suspect as having a touch of pathology of the pituitary gland. They were among the century-old scratching posts for the earlier philosophers; they have been saved from the utter futility of such debates as how many angels could stand on the end of a needle by the fact that they did have a practical relationship to such things as responsibility, punishment, incentive. Few fanatics, from the early Inquisitors to the modern Nazis, have failed to extol the virtues of will-power. Few unhappy people suffering from behavioral breakdowns have escaped being figuratively beaten over the head by strong-minded friends swinging the "will-power" myths.

It is an unusual afternoon when the psychiatrist does not encounter someone whose troubles have been materially in-

creased by these myths. Typically, the fellow who tells his story across your desk is an excessively anxious-minded, conscientious fellow. He has been under special pressure at his job for months or years. During World War II, the bank in which he worked lost all of their most competent and reliable younger men, and the patient had to take on more and more responsibility for inadequate youngsters. He began to take his work home with him, woke up in the night thinking about it, couldn't concentrate as well as formerly. He began to have growing difficulty making decisions, worked even longer hours to catch up. Eventually, several months earlier, he had reached a point where he felt so anxious-minded, so fatigued, so incapable of dealing with things, that he went to see his family doctor who told him that all he wanted was a holiday in the mountains, at the sea, on the farm, or in the city, in fact anywhere the worthy doctor would like to be himself.

After a couple of weeks on holiday, the patient had felt a little better, but the very thought of going back to work brought on his old feelings of insecurity, depression, and anxiety. Urged on by his own conscientiousness, he had made an attempt, but was barely in sight of his desk when he felt that he could not stand it, and had to go home. The weeks and months went by, and the benevolence of his company for an employee who had always done what he was expected to do and a little more, began to harden into a policy of firmness. From here on his friends and his colleagues began to tell him that he should "snap out of it."

Especially vociferous in these exhortations to "snap out of it" is the robust, chest-beating dumbbell who, to satisfy psychological necessities forever hidden from himself, delights in cold tubs, setting-up exercises, and strong-minded walks in the rain. The straining patient is urged to "be a man," to "pull yourself together—you don't want people to think you have a yellow streak, do you?"; then, too, "You shouldn't think so much about yourself; you should get out and get going."

Actually, the unhappy patient has no more chance of "snap-

ping out" of his tensional anxiety state than he would have of snapping a broken leg together and going out to play a brisk game of golf on the afternoon of his accident.

Where does all this nonsense come from? We still don't know. We know only that the will-power belief is showing itself up as an increasingly sterile concept. It is disappearing from the calculations of the social scientists. The former bulky chapters devoted to it have shrunk to an obligatory paragraph or have been simply dropped out without comment by author or reader. It seems to have drawn a certain amount of its earlier force from the ancient concept of a human being divided into a body and a mind, or spirit, or what you will. The mind or spirit stood over the body in constant watchfulness for the weaknesses, the sloppiness, the love of low life and sloth into which the wretched thing was only too likely to lapse. When this happened the mind, alerted by the ever-waking conscience, let out a disapproving shout, the man exerted his will-power, the body was snapped out of whatever messiness it had strayed into, and the whole resumed its decorous path.

With the growth of the scientific study of human behavior, and with the growing fertility of the concept of the human being as a single unit, this strange contraption, the will-power myth, has begun to disappear down the road to the ultimate limbo of folklore. However, it is still passing out through lay thinking where it can, and does, do considerable harm. It lingers not only because of the momentum of old concepts but because superficially it seems to give answers to something that we have all experienced. It is true that by special efforts we can temporarily improve our performance, whether it is in the last stretches of a mile race, when we are beginning to suffer from lack of oxygen in a climbing plane, or when we are lapsing into stupefaction in the midst of an interminably boring conversation. That effort, however, is strictly limited. It is limited with respect to the extent of improvement which it can achieve, the time over which it can operate and, finally and most important, with respect

to the kind of performance which it can improve. Attempts to utilize this special mechanism in connection with many aspects of human behavior have unhappy results. When it is applied as a means of dealing with a strong, instinctive drive, such as sexual needs expressing themselves in masturbation, it will almost constantly fail and, in doing so, simply increase the feelings of guilt and inadequacy which a considerable number of people quite erroneously, still attach to this common and harmless human experience.

When this will-power mechanism is applied to actual nervous illnesses, such as the anxiety states, failure and hurt are again its consequences. And it is applied in this connection with considerable frequency. For there is still a widespread conviction that at least certain forms of nervous illness are "put on"; or, at best, could have been prevented by the exercise of will power. To suffer from a psychoneurosis is still, for many, a reproach. It is regarded as a sign of weakness, an evidence of a willingness to take advantage of others.

In reality, the person who suffers from an anxiety state is often a particularly conscientious person who has been overly sensitive to criticism and who readily develops feelings of guilt. To adjure him to "snap out of it" is simply to increase his self-criticism, and to urge him to greater effort is to increase his tension and, therefore, his anxiety.

It cannot be too strongly stressed that the use of the "will-power" concept has no value in dealing with nervous illness, and very little in dealing with human behavior in general. For it is entirely too impregnated with the old moralistic thinking to have any real value in determining human behavior. Its place has been taken by new ideas coming out of the study of incentives, of motivations, of conditioning, and frustration. To us now it seems the simplest horse sense that a mechanism or an organism will perform as well and as adequately as it is set up to perform. If it performs at less than its expected level, then readjustments have to be made. Our predecessors, obsessed with the concepts

of the innate sinfulness and wickedness of man, were convinced that he could be made to improve his performance only by the use of whips, and one of these was "will-power," but into the hands of the split-off mind.

Of all the myths that trouble mankind, none have been more disastrous than those which are concerned with the alleged differences between men living in the same community, between men in different national groups, and between men coming from different racial stocks.

Beliefs in the superiority or inferiority of individuals from different cultural groups are of great antiquity. They have arisen for many reasons. The most fertile source was conquest. When one group beat the brains out of a sufficient number of the males of a neighboring group and assumed government of the remnants, the creation of a belief that the conquered people were innately inferior was of great value. It enhanced the feeling of dominance experienced by the invaders and it abated their feelings of guilt. Furthermore, if the conquered people could be forced to accept the assertion of their own innate inadequacy, they would be considerably more amenable. Consequently, we find that everywhere, even up to modern times, the myth of the innate superiority of the invader is actively at work. Actually, the superiority of the conqueror generally rests on one or more of many reasons, among which general superiority is not necessarily to be recognized. For example, the early domination and occupation of parts of France by the English is to be ascribed both to the greater social unity of the latter and to the superiority of the English long-bow over the cross-bow which the French used. In other instances it is a matter of simple numbers, as in the conquest and absorption of Wales.

It is questionable how great a role an adequate diet and a series of peculiarly paralyzing religions play in the alleged fundamental differences between the capacities of white groups and those considerably larger colored groups in tropical countries, over which, until recent times, the whites exercised control in the



name of their rarely questioned superiority. The world's most highly publicized example of this is, of course, India.

Contrariwise, the invention of new political beliefs or weapons may give a great temporary advantage to others. The development of modern political ideas of equality and first appearance of the concept of a people's army gave the French, at the time of their Revolution and for some decades thereafter, a considerable advantage over their neighbors, who collapsed, not simply before Napoleon's military genius, but under the impact of the new kind of army drawn from the people themselves—a people fervid with a belief in new political principles which also had a great appeal to large groups within the states they attacked.

In our times, we have seen the immense advantage accruing to the Germans from the development of a political doctrine which, while it cannot be described as new, was certainly exceedingly acceptable to a people writhing with the pangs of an earlier, humiliating defeat. In this doctrine, the myth of a racial superiority reached a height of absurdity unsurpassed in history. Indeed, to such an extreme was this myth carried in its practical application, that we may say its very creation, while possibly essential to the arousing and unifying of the German people for war, actually constituted one of the main factors in its own overthrow. Acceptance by the conquered people, save in a few instances, was utterly impossible, and its enforcement served merely to integrate the forces of resistance.

The actual situation is that at the present time we are not in possession of any facts which demonstrate fundamental differences between the potential capacities of members of the various groups which make up our world. Exception probably must be taken in the case of a few extremely primitive peoples, such as the Australian aborigines and the pigmy tribes of Africa. Emphasis must be placed upon the word "potential." Due to one or many of the causes mentioned above—diet, political systems, the stunting effects of worn-out and palpably absurd beliefs ground into young minds, lack of social unity—differences do

exist, at least in the capacity to deal effectively with the modern industrial world. Indeed, certain cultures are so incapable of managing the problems of modern civilization that they constitute an actual hazard. They are threats to the maintenance of health controls; they serve as potential focal points for epidemics. Through their inability to keep internal order in their communities, they threaten the lines of world communication and transportation, and through their inability to manage their own problems of supply they experience famines which constitute unpredictable drains upon the resources of the rest of the world.

However, when members of these groups are placed in a more advanced culture, they show a considerable capacity to develop their abilities to deal with it, a capacity which, if given equal opportunity, tends to increase with subsequent generations.

The same assertions of fundamental superiority have been made, with even less justification, about social groups within a culture. These myths are at their extreme, of course, in a period of conquest or in the days of slavery. Where the myths are well established, a caste system exists which may become perpetuated by the creation of hereditary titles and the recognition of "old families," or stratification may depend primarily upon material possessions.

What have the social sciences to say with reference to these myths? From the immense amount of work which has been done in the last twenty years upon the differences between individuals, it can be stated that very considerable differences do exist among persons. Many of these variations do not necessarily constitute superiority or inferiority. It would be extremely difficult to decide whether a man who was very inadequate in his mathematical capacity but outstanding in his ability to understand and create music was innately superior or inferior to a tone-deaf mathematician of national reputation. It can be said, of course, that real differences of total superiority and inferiority do exist. There are, for instance, those born with intellectual handicaps of so general a nature that they are quite incapable of competing

in any set of circumstances with their more favorably endowed fellows. Having pointed this out, however, it can be said that the true differences in capacity in a given culture do not conform, or conform only to a limited extent, to the differences asserted to be present by the existing myths. This is particularly true in a culture in which there is a hierarchy of groups which have been static over several generations. Under these circumstances, the potential capacities of the members of the higher social groups do not tend to differ appreciably from those of the lower. Due to differences in opportunity, the current capacities may, it is true, be less in the members of the underprivileged groups, but this constitutes something quite different from the assertions of the current myths to the effect that innate differences do exist.

In a culture in which greater mobility exists, in which members of the various social groups pass more freely both up and down the social hierarchy, those of lesser innate capacity show some tendency to gravitate to the lower groups.

These, then, are some of our myths—the enfeebled and dying ones that many, if not most, of us can see for what they are. There are others still enmeshed in the machinery of our society, still so protected by taboo and sanction that we cannot yet get at them. We pay for them all right, in stunted minds, in twisted human relations, and in the delaying and frustrating of a freer and happier design of living.

## CHAPTER IX

### *OTHER PEOPLE*

OF ALL THE OLD AND DREADFUL THINGS WHICH HAVE FOUND THEIR way from our first tribal fires down the generations to live again with us, the chief, the Lord High Executioner, is our fear of The Stranger.

He is the unknown man—the foreigner. His beliefs and his customs are not ours. He does things forbidden to us; he feels guilty doing things which our culture permits us to do. Therefore, he arouses our anxiety; he and his ways are a threat. His freedom to manage his relations with women differently, his ways of expressing hostility, of dealing with aggression, stir drives and longings which our culture has driven deep into repression. His taboos and lack of taboos, his sacred gods, by their very existence breed in us the insidious thought that perhaps what we, from our youth, have believed to be the natural order of things may be simply the products of our own invention.

Against this thought, we arm ourselves with that terrible weapon—fear and hatred of The Stranger. All those who do not conform to our ways, who do not speak our language, who do not marry as we marry, who do not govern themselves as we do, who do not support the same array of gods and attendant hierarchies as we do, are Strangers. They are not men—they are Wops and Frogs, Limeys, Niggers or White Trash.

There is no Bill of Rights for men everywhere around the

earth. Everywhere there are clusters of chosen people. Around them stand the rest of humanity—strangers without the law.

This fear and hatred of The Stranger is an ancient thing. Of its several roots, the deepest and the most hidden, is our fear of ourselves. The struggles which we have had to control ourselves, to curb our driving aggression, to prevent our urge for individual satisfaction and domination from wrecking our social structure have been intense. It has been necessary to erect fictions and taboos at every strategic point throughout our culture in order to protect our social structure. They can be seen hard at work any morning in the week. Social taboos exist to this day concerning criticism of kings and many of us believe the fictions of qualitative differences between members of various social strata, and the alleged miracles through which religious systems everywhere have attempted to enforce their authority.

But as we have grown more secure in the conquest of our world, and as we slowly learn more about ourselves we are able to look more directly and realistically at that most potent force in the universe—our own nature. We are less afraid of ourselves, and therefore we are able to examine much more dispassionately the ways in which other cultures have managed relations between men and women, between parents and children, and how they have managed the problem of sharing goods.

It is only the dull and tradition-bound who think of the people of Melanesia, of Central Africa, of the upper Amazon as savages and therefore to be converted, civilized or destroyed. For the social scientists, and for many others, such cultural groups provide the most priceless insight into ourselves. It is extremely difficult for the scientific worker whose sources of information are confined to his own culture to know what deviations of behavior are essentially harmful and what are simply variations (and quite practical ones) in ways of managing life. Many a child has carried on, with apparent impunity, sexual activities which his culture asserts to be "contrary to human nature," until such time as he discovered that his culture condemned his actions. Often it was

only thereafter that the child began to experience the dire results that had been prophesied.

In our cities and rural areas alike, a certain number of children will, in their first decade, have sexual relations with other children. This is something which is completely condemned by our mores. There are cultures, however, in which such relationships are accepted as natural. While we may suspect the harm done to our children by the intense condemnation they experience at the hands of parents and neighbors on discovery, we cannot fully assess this until we can learn how the personalities of children evolve in societies in which early sex play is permitted. Likewise we may suspect that people brought up in families in which the parents' authority may not be challenged or discussed, or brought up as adherents of the most authoritarian of religions, are people who will show a crippling of their capacity to develop initiative, to be inventive, to understand and use new ways and ideas; but we cannot be sure of the damaging effects of indoctrination until we can study cultures in which prohibitions, taboos, rites, and ceremonies are even more numerous than in our own.

It is only when we are able to look at these other cultures, to see how the people in them manage their affairs, that we shall be able to assess the full range of human nature. At present, we still accept as the natural, the inevitable, the fundamental workings of human nature, things which are only the ways which our culture, for a variety of reasons, has worked out to give expression to the really basic needs of human beings.

Until recently, the scientific methods which have transformed our relations with our material environment had no access to our relations with each other. The ordering and directing of relations between people was pre-empted by the various religions and by numerous other groups struggling for power with the religions and among themselves.

Indeed, it is a striking commentary upon that pre-emption that the greatest impetus to scientific investigation of human behavior has come from the study of the abnormal. It is almost

as though, pressed and harried by the resounding success of scientific study in the material field, we had given reluctant consent to its application to the problems of those whose behavior was abnormal—but not to ourselves. We were different, we were good or bad, normal or otherwise. We were different, so we protested, our spirit was measureless, our decisions the unique manifestations of a free will, our behavior beyond the calculations of a science which had measured mere mountains, spanned the seas, and harnessed the storm. Despite these infantile shrieks for an egocentric universe, we are beginning (most fortunately for ourselves) to express and then to manipulate human behavior in scientific terms.

But we are only beginning, and that beginning has made practically no penetration into day to day living. Witness the chronic suspiciousness of many individuals and the habitually guarded way in which we meet strangers.

We need other people—and we are afraid of other people. That is the dynamic center of human relations. From the factors in that equation radiate out forces that repel people, that bind them into groups, that generate hates and hostilities, inadequacies, devotions, submissions, panics, and therapies.

We need other people for the elementary reason that we are not complete in ourselves—and this in a thoroughly literal sense. We are so accustomed to buying ourselves one seat in the plane, to paying one income tax, to voting once only, and to propriety insisting that there are certain things we ought to do alone, that we have lost sight of the fact that we are not complete units.

We are, of course, willing enough to agree that we have got where we are by improving on the original plan of taking in each others washing; we know that if one of us bakes the bread, another makes the beds, one fattens the pigs, another cuts their throats, a third stuffs them into their own intestines and a fourth sells them as sausage the glories of civilization are advanced much more rapidly than if each tried to do all these things himself. We have accepted this somewhat reluctantly. The labels “home-

grown," "home-cooked," "hand-made" are still, and quite undeservedly, on the "good" side of the ledger, while "home-made" has slipped over, at least for some things, onto the "bad" side.

There was quite a rumpus when it was finally insisted that each parent was not a natural-born grade, high school, and college teacher. That someone else should make our winter woolies, our dresses, and our pillow-slips was so clearly an advantage that we have accepted it without much difficulty. But the possibility that the job of being the parent of the next generation should be undertaken only by those most fitted is still apt to create such an uproar that there is little to be gained by mentioning it.

The incompleteness of the individual, which makes us need people so profoundly, is much more intimate than is represented in the sharing of jobs with our neighbors. This incompleteness is most obvious in the sexual field. This becomes clearer when we say what is now reasonably evident that the sexual life comprises much more than the procreating of children. It constitutes, either in its direct expression or in the innumerable indirect expressions into which it has been driven through denial, a large part of our relationships with others.

Using the term sexual in its widest sense to cover all relations between the sexes, and not simply the strictly physical, one may say that those who have not developed such relationships are abnormal. The adolescent boy who has never shown any interest in girls, and the young woman who has never had a date, both cause the psychiatrist to stop in his clinical stride and ask what's wrong.

One well-turned-out, attractive looking girl in her teens had never been able to feel that she could arouse the interest of boys. She felt that other girls had so much more of that "it," "oomph," that eternal what-have-you which is so hard to define but which is so pleasantly easy to recognize. Boys could be, and were, easily whistled away from her by any of her girl friends who were sure that they had what it takes. Her lack of confidence rendered her



shy and gauche with the first few boys she met. To protect herself from being hurt any further, she began to avoid meeting boys, she broke dates, gave up going down in the evening to the soda-fountain, and wouldn't go out car-riding with the kids. Eventually she began to drop her girl friends because they talked all the time about boys and there was nothing that she could, or would, contribute to such hen sessions. Back of her stood her mother, a woman rendered hostile and insecure and continually critical by the early death of her own mother and the introduction of an aggressive stepmother.

Another girl had had her psychosexual development so disturbed by attacks which her father had made upon her when she was in her early teens that she feared men to such a degree that she sought companionship and occasional sexual satisfaction only from other women.

Relationships of various degrees of intensity, duration, and intimacy between men and women are the natural expressions of normal people. Where these relationships between the sexes are absent or are abnormal, the explanation is to be found almost always in things which have happened as the man or the woman grew up.

We are each incomplete in ourselves for another major reason, and that is that we need other people with whom we can interact in non-sexual ways. We need other people as cures and as preventions. We have to be able to talk things out, get things off our chests. We need other people for our triumphs, for our sadism, for our desire to be hurt. We need them to give meaning to our exhibitionism, our competitiveness, and our ambition.

It is true that we can, and do, talk to ourselves and even make faces in the mirror. Apart from the very obvious possibility that this may be misunderstood by the neighbors, it is generally agreed that it is an unsatisfactory sort of business. As a corrective to the quite unjustified sense of complete individuality (conferred upon us in part at least by the fact that we usually have a tombstone of our own, do not share our dentures and are born

one at a time) it is useful to think of that little cutting-out game which is sometimes introduced by the desperate hostess as the cocktails wear off and clouds of boredom settle down on the party. A piece of paper is folded the appropriate number of times and then cut out in the necessary manner. When the paper is unfolded, the little figures appear in a row, all connected by their shoulders, hips, and ankles.

We need other people all right, for we are a part of them. But we fear them. We fear them for good reason. More than any other thing living or elemental they frustrate us and have it in their power to cripple and, indeed, destroy us.

It is not necessary to use the less frequent, though plentiful enough, examples of the man afraid of his boss whom he identifies with a tyrannical father who constituted such a threat to him in his boyhood, or the young man afraid to trust any women because of the way his mother made use of him in his childhood. These situations are common, but we can see this fear of people every day in the anxieties of the after-dinner speaker who feels that the next mouthful of chicken à la king will choke him, in the debutante at her first party who dances with her body stiff as a post, in the student nurse trembling inside her uniform as she waits outside the superintendent's office, in the strangers passing each other on a lonely road at night, in our curious fear of long-empty houses. But most clearly of all we can see it in social events all the way from tea parties to ambassadorial receptions.

It is this fear of other people that is responsible for such appalling things as party manners, social etiquette, protocol, the clichés we exchange, the poses we assume.

Naturally enough, as the present lords of creation, we do not follow the same methods of getting acquainted as do our house pets. We have long since graduated from the olfactory to the verbal; though in passing, one may glance reflectively at the five hundred and sixty-one different kinds of perfume, the seductive range of bathsalts, and the thriving trade in deodorants. Nevertheless, whenever strangers meet, there follows a period of testing

out. The preliminaries consist in a series of vacuous statements of the "Don't you adore," "I think she is perfectly sweet," "I am so happy to be here" category. These are designed to conceal all but the faintest traces of your partner's real interests, pet hates, and intriguing peculiarities, but the nimble-minded may earn a reputation of being "so understanding" by picking up the odd clue and tracing it back to where the gushing creature really lives—that is, if he is kindly-minded and uses his discovery to stroke the ego the right way. There are some so fearless of retributive scratches, or so sadistic, that they use what they have found simply for mortification and embarrassment.

By and large, however, the development of the social relationship is stereotyped. Those who begin to roll the conversational ball by saying "I think our hostess is a louse," or, "I have just been told that you will probably bore me speechless," are few enough to warrant special mention when you come to write your memoirs.

What is the purpose of all this assumption of attitudes and exchanging of apparently irrelevant conversational lozenges? In part, at least, it is due to the fact that we operate on a "double standard"—that Victorian phrase used discreetly to point out the fact that men were allowed to behave differently from women. While with passing time men have continued to behave more so, women have begun to catch up. Consequently the standards are getting to be pretty much the same, and the old phrase appears headed for the garbage heap. Employment—though let us hope of a temporary nature—may be found for it in describing the fact that human beings as they are said to be and human beings as they actually are, are two different propositions. This naturally makes the ordinary citizen wary. And the more he has been conditioned to accept the conventional descriptions of how people are supposed to act, the more wary he is. For naturally this makes him more painfully aware that he has a great many impulses to action, a great many desires and hatreds that simply don't fit into the conventional picture.

An appreciable amount of the psychiatrist's time is spent in assisting people to accept perfectly normal aspects of their own personalities. For instance, the conventional picture of human behavior does not include the fact that the desire to end one's own life or that of someone else is as common as it is. The well-known difficulty in disposing of the body, and the wholehearted interest of other members of the community (each fearful that he might be the next victim) in running down murderers, discourages all but the most impetuous or the most self-confident. But it by no means discourages interest in the subject. For evidence of this, look at the display of twenty-five-cent books in your railroad station bookstall, or at the gory titles which bring citizens into their neighborhood movie theatres, or at the fiction magazine you buy. Here you can get as much thrill as your projection mechanisms can carry—and all in perfect safety. The matter of taking your own life is a bit different. If you do a really good job, someone else has to dispose of the body. If you do a poor one, the odds are that there will be very little damage and no one will find out. Even if they do find out, it is still possible that your attempt may be put to good use. Many a hostile and frustrated wife has held the threat of suicide over her erring husband's head with occasional swallowing of messy but carefully measured doses of iodine, or the turning on of a gas oven and ostentatious plugging up of the cracks around the windows and doors ten minutes before Bob is due home from the office.

In one way or another, the taking of their own life is something that people spend much more time thinking about, planning, and occasionally carrying out than conventional belief gives credence to.

The same is true of a whole range of symptoms of stress and maladjustment. There is a story, from those old days when you went into battle sitting on a horse if you had been born into the correct social stratum, that a subaltern, noting the quivering of his chief's legs as he sat on his charger (it is a little hard to visualize the possibility of one's legs trembling visibly on a

horse) said, "Why, General, I believe you are afraid." "Egad and damme," quavered the indignant General, "And if you were so scared as I am, you would run away."

Despite such earlier glimpses of the light, one of the tasks which had to be undertaken during World War II was that of letting people in on the fact that everyone is scared, that anxiety is a normal protective device like pain in your thumb when you put it on a hot stove. The same is true of compulsive and obsessive thoughts which come and go in a vastly greater number of people than we know of; it is true of a whole range of fears—of disease, dirt, elevators, rabbits, dark cupboards, going out without one's husband, crowds, and even of red-haired men.

Each has his private world in which all these things are going on. They are real. They are the stuff of life. But they are private; the key to them is given only to special people, and even they are rarely allowed to see all; the rest are kept out by the wall of clichés, postures, manners. We are afraid of each other because we don't know what goes on in each other's private world. Indeed, if one believes the conventional story sufficiently, we may not think that anyone else has those urges, desires, and hates. We might be different (so run our fears) and the fate of the different is the fate of the white crow: always persecution, often destruction.

These common fears of other people reach uncommon intensities in those who have developed inferiority feelings. One indication of how frequent such feelings are is the way in which the older phrase, "inferiority complex," was picked up and used. It appeared at the dinner table, in the streets, at the night club; it was used to advertise the unpleasantness of halitosis, perspiration, shortness, fatness, and thinness. It was used as an argument and as a defence. Somehow or other, people were able to talk about themselves as having an inferiority complex when they would never talk about themselves as suffering from obsessive thinking or anxiety attacks.

Feelings of inferiority come from many sources. Some find

their origin in the very early years of the child brought up by a tyrannical father. These feelings of inadequacy will later manifest themselves not only in the presence of the father but also in the presence of all others who occupy a comparable authoritative position.

Such was the situation of a middle-aged engineer, just beginning to enter into executive positions. His early childhood had been made extremely unhappy by the continued friction between his mother and father. The latter was domineering and sometimes brutal towards the boy and his mother. The mother was clearly afraid of her husband and communicated these fears to the son, thus augmenting his own. Throughout his life, he had feared his teachers and older boys who were domineering. At the time when he came to seek assistance with his problem, he had become an unusually competent person, well liked by his subordinates but quite unable to maintain any confidence when dealing with his boss. Then he would become anxious, tense, and even confused. He would, on occasion, try to carry the situation off by adopting an exaggeratedly hearty manner, but at the least sign of coldness or reserve on the part of his boss he would go to pieces. He would give a confused report, say things that he could not subsequently remember, and, in general, leave an impression of someone who was much less competent than he actually was. Once the relationship of his present difficulties to his childhood experiences with his father was brought to light, he began to experience considerable gain in confidence.

Such conditions do not arise only in relationship to a tyrannical father. They may as easily be occasioned by the fact that the father is singularly successful and that the boy's confidence is rotted during his growing years by the gnawing conviction of the hopelessness of competition.

Again, these feelings of inadequacy may come from the child's early belief that he is different. These beliefs often take form during early struggles over masturbation. Such was true of a

woman, now in her forties, who started to masturbate at the age of six. She was discovered by her mother who told her that she was unnatural and that if she continued she would do herself irreparable harm. The girl continued, though feeling extremely guilty. She struggled to stop this activity which she firmly believed was making her different and doing her permanent injury. She was unable to do so, and gradually acquired a strong sense of inadequacy which, while it was at first related only to her inability to control her masturbation, eventually became related to her whole life. She became quite unable to hold her own with others. Her sisters and her parents, aware of this, began to adopt increasingly superior attitudes toward her and would assert that she was too little or too young to undertake this or that. They disparaged her appearance, and later exercised such destructive criticism on her choice of boy friends that one love affair after another was broken off and she was still single when she reached her forties. She eventually became self-conscious when she went out with younger men because she was afraid that someone might say she was husband-hunting. Her friends were mainly married couples. She had several affairs with the husbands, apparently mainly on their initiative. Finally she acquired gonorrhea from one of them, and thereafter stopped all friendships with men. Now, in her forties, she found herself without a home of her own, unable to develop further friendships with men, and, at least in part because of her lack of confidence, without any training or plan of work. Faced with the necessity of working out a design of living for the next several decades, she developed an anxiety state.

Still other causes of these crippling feelings of anxiety exist. Among them is lack of affection during the early years of life, especially if that affection has been poured out by the parents upon some other member of the family. These feelings may also be based upon defects, fancied or real. The girl who early believes that she is unduly plain, and who has not realized the transforming powers of the beauty parlor, may suffer all her

life. Sometimes these feelings are developed in relation to defects which loom large in the popular mind, but which are of little actual importance in later life—a squint or the need to wear glasses. At other times, especially in boys, they are related to feelings of inferiority concerning the sex organs. These feelings of inferiority are usually centered around the boy's concern over the size of his sexual organs. He has compared his own with those of a number of others or with his father's. During boyhood and adolescence, sexual abilities are closely associated in the minds of these youngsters with "being a man." While at first the feeling of inadequacy is fairly strictly related to the sexual aspects of "being a man," it is gradually extended to all relations of life, so that ultimately feelings of inadequacy which were originally related to what the boy believed to be a sexual inferiority come to constitute a general feeling of inadequacy.

In dealing with these feelings of inadequacy, the primary step is to clarify the true causes. At the outset these often are not known to the individual. It is one of the characteristics of human nature that events which occurred in our childhood and which were evaluated in terms of our childhood experience and then forgotten, tend to influence us in terms of that childhood evaluation. If they can be brought to light once more and reassessed in terms of our much wider experience, they are often seen as of quite small significance and, therefore, disturb us little from that point on. In this way, inadequacies in daily life, when they are clearly related to earlier feelings of inferiority and when the latter are shown to have been based to a considerable extent upon misjudgment, will often begin to disappear.

Once the man who feels inadequate in dealing with his boss realizes that his present feelings are echoes of his relation with his father, he will usually begin to feel himself freer. This is especially true if he can compare his memory of the formidable giant of his childhood days with his father as he actually is—a man of moderate stature facing difficulties and failures at least as great and as numerous as his own.



This discussion of ours about our relations with other people comes to an end in two "musts." We must learn more about them; we must see to it that the old ways of thinking about people are cleared out of the way so that we can be at least as practical in dealing with people as we are in dealing with our diet, our automobiles or the arrangements we make for our summer holidays. The scrapping system we talked about in the chapter on the power of myths can, and should, have a field day here. The second "must" is the recognition of the damage that certain personalities can do, especially to those who are still plastic. This was an impossible working concept for a century that saw the transmission of power through driving-rods and cogwheels, that created energy through the expansion of gases, that had to invent an ether before it could account for the passage of light from the sun to brown our backs.

It should not be impossible for a period which has achieved the highly abstract thinking necessary to unravel atomic power, to apply relativity, and to effect penetrating analyses of human behavior. The concepts are there. They require practical application. This is always easiest if they can be introduced as relatives of those we already know and accept. We are quite willing to let the public health officer point out and take action about health hazards such as typhoid carriers, dirty hotel kitchens, unscreened garbage heaps, and rat-infested buildings. So let us say that appropriately trained people—and we can give the required training—can very reasonably be set about the business of recognizing and doing something about people and situations that are serious psychological hazards. There are plenty of both. There is the psychologically crippled son of an immensely able and driving father who endeavors to break down the confidence of his wife, using as a lever her need for affection. He tried to render her inadequate and dependent on him because of his need for assertion. There are the parents of the "anxiety families" through which anxiety, insecurity, frigidity, and feelings of inadequacy may be handed down for generations.

There are the areas in which a social organization has become fixed, incapable of modification with the times, and which, therefore, is threatened with ruthless destruction. In such areas people grow up uncertain and unconfident and unfitted for the present. There are the hostile personalities who should not be allowed to occupy positions in which they can damage others. There are the uncertain and vacillating who should not be allowed to squat, unhappily portentous, upon the seats of authority.

As our knowledge of social contagion grows, there undoubtedly will be many more to be added. But a start is to be made.

## CHAPTER X

### *GROWING OLD*

GROWING OLD IS AN IMMEMORIAL GRIEF OF MANKIND. TO LOSE the striding joy of our racing feet, the fierce, sweet pride in the long swim, the lonely climb, no more to feel the longing and the fear of the young girl going to her early love, are the eternal sorrows of man. From the very dawn of our days on earth, from the time when we first turned to record our yearnings and our wonderings, the prose and poetry of man have called out with infinite regret against the passing of time.

It is strange and piercingly sad to hear the words of men dead these thousands of years voice the same grief, the same rebellion that moves us in this day that, for a time, is ours.

If one makes the thoroughly unfair comparison between these voices and those unlovely ones that come out of the 8:00 A.M. radio, one will hear just this. It is unfair, for the centuries have filtered out all the dull dogs, the monotonous-minded burlers who earned a precarious living singing to their fellows around campfires, in lake dwellings, in the woods, in the stinking little medieval towns, or on the open plain.

But if we can forget the outrage to our ears and remember that the razor, shoe, soap, and cigarette manufacturers who sign the pay checks pay off strictly on the basis of the number of ears the crooner can enter and hold, it is a safe bet that we will find he is saying what people want to hear. He is saying that

love is going to be just as vigorous in December as it is in May. He is saying, with that complete lack of reality which is so dear to the frustrated mind, that the palpitating present will last forever, that no matter whether your dentures rattle and you get up from your chair with a stick and a groan, you will still look like sweet seventeen to someone.

The words may be stupid and banal, the sentiment as heavy as a wet rug, but this ancient longing draws dignity from the tragedy of our passing stay. It is impossible to stand in some great library between the marshalled minds of men who, one morning long ago, walked and felt the wind, saw the little segment of their times unfold, without feeling the passion of their resentment against their inevitable aging.

We mean to master this business of aging. Everything, from our fairy tales—those fragments of our fantasy life—to the latest advances of the biological sciences in securing the growth of cells and organs long after their former hosts have died, everything from gruesome attempts at resuscitation after death to the pioneer efforts to replace by transplantation even such vital organs as the heart, bespeaks our determination.

We are on the edge of our greatest enterprise. It is characteristic of the chaotic state of human affairs that we should come to it distracted by the hypnotic howls of supermen, exhausted by the Great Wars and hopelessly preparing for another, and at a time when we are in the midst of an enormous rearrangement of our social organization. However, the human being is incredibly tough, and there is no doubt that he will carry on like a one-man band, doing everything at once, at least until we get through to steadier times.

Apart from lamenting, mourning and reminiscing what are we actually doing about the business of growing old? We can say, very simply: a great deal more than has ever been done before. The circumstances are much more favorable. The need, actually, is no more piercingly felt. Nothing can surpass the poignant regret of Shakespeare's musings upon the passing of life.

Even the nineteenth century, with its determined conviction that this earth was simply a rather unpleasant, but obligatory, interlude in an eternal existence, has a literature full of intense sadness over the passage of youth and loveliness and of life itself.

But now a few people, and their number is growing, are beginning to look at the old man with a reflective, considering, speculative eye. The physician making rounds turns from the old woman with her sunken mouth, her rounded semi-simian eyes, her elastic skin that can be made to stand out in pinched-up wrinkles, her tremor, her fatigue, her petit pas gait, the final victory of flexion over extension in the bowing of her figure, to his students in their twenties and contrasts these appalling changes with those of even the most acute ordinary diseases. If the change from student cherubism to senile collapse were to occur within a week's time, one undoubtedly would feel that this was a catastrophe of the first order. All the resources of medicine would be organized to ferret out its causes, to work out measures to correct and prevent. It's Time that fools us.

Why are we beginning to look at aging differently now? Largely because we have the tools with which to make a beginning. Basically they are the same tools that dug out the facts about the old "inflammation of the bowels" and gave us the modern streamlined appendectomy. They are the selfsame tools that took the "certain death" label off general paresis, that have banished some diseases entirely and will banish more when we gain sufficient knowledge about the manipulation of social attitudes and beliefs.

The public support which we need to use these tools is slowly gathering. For, as the great clerical religions gradually recede from the human scene, the interest and energy of men are being liberated in increasing measure for the tasks of dealing with the here and now—with the pressing problems of improving things as they are, of making our life the satisfying thing it could be, of prolonging and freeing it from the insecurities and limitations which, in the past, have plagued its later years.

Moreover, in the next few decades, we shall enter a period in which the proportion of older persons to the younger population will be greater than at any time since we began to keep a census. We have no facts, as yet, about the running of a society predominantly post-menopausal, but we have got to get them.

What about the men who are going out after these facts? What are they expecting to find? What are their basic beliefs about this business of aging? For, as a man fantasizes, so shall he find. As we move into this mid-century world, new, but not at all brave with bright hopes, on the contrary, grey with gathering hostility and threatening disasters, we know more certainly than before that a man's basic premises, his way of looking at his world, will determine how he will try to manage it. They will determine how he will set up his problems for study and will decide for him whether or not he will be able to see things that lie right under his nose.

Look at the various ways in which men have come to this problem of the prolongation of living. There are those who are convinced that the very nature of man's constitution has set a limit to his life and that, therefore, very little can be done about it. Other more hopeful spirits, while agreeing that the nature of our organism is such that death is inevitable, nonetheless believe that we have not yet any clear idea of how long the span of life might be under ideal conditions. They point out, very truly, that quite often a man dies because one part has become prematurely old and worn out while the rest remains sturdy enough to carry him on for several decades longer. Sometimes it is the heart—very often so in these years of sustained tension. Sometimes it is the nervous system or the gastro-intestinal tracts which prove to be the weak links.

Those who hold this view direct their efforts to learning the causes for breakdown in these particular areas. The idea towards which they work is that man's powers and his enjoyment of life should be sustained on a high level until close to the very end and that that end should be delayed until all his tissues and sys-

tems are equally worn out—the idea of the traditional “one-horse shay” that finally broke down everywhere at once. Belief has been expressed that by such means the average span of life could be extended considerably beyond the traditional three score and ten.

Finally, there are those who refuse to believe that death is the inevitable termination of life. They see most living things as experimental designs still in their early stages with lots of faults waiting to be ironed out. They believe that life comes to an end simply because the model through which it is expressing itself is defective. Some of the more complicated models, such as our own, cannot get rid of their own waste products in a fully satisfactory way. They are like the motor which finally comes to a stop because it chokes up on its own carbon.

In support of this assertion that death is not inevitable, its adherents point to the fact that, as the design which life takes is varied, the duration is also varied, and, indeed, very greatly so. They point to the sequoia of California, which have lived an estimated three thousand years, and contrast these with the May flies which live only a few hours or days. Interesting studies upon the relation of the bulk of the living organism to life expectancy have been carried out. Other studies have shown that, by and large, there is some relationship between the rate at which a particular organism is designed to use energy and the length of its life.

Tinkering around with ourselves is something that we can't resist. We fall for the promoter who tells us that we have some hidden powers which require only his technique, his course of training, and, naturally, our dollars, to make them blossom. We fall no less hard for the idea that we are what we eat; hence the diets and the fasts, the ancient beliefs that we could grow strong if we ate the hearts of our enemies, hence the enormous amount of patent medicine swilling, especially in the middle years when a man is as old as he feels till he tries. All this hopeful pepping up is mainly useless. But science draws strength from fantasy;

and diet has at last come through with something more substantial than bedtime reverie. For diet has prolonged life, and most spectacularly. True, the lives prolonged are those of rats, but if we can glean something concerning the business of living from studies on chimpanzees and dogs and guinea pigs, we certainly can transfer our facts about staying alive from rats to men.

This remarkable prolongation of life has been achieved by bringing up rats on a considerably limited diet for the first part of their lives and then gradually returning them to a full intake. The duration of life of such animals, in comparison with their litter mates which were given a full diet from the outset of their lives, was much longer. The differences, indeed, were quite startling. For hundreds of days after those rats which had been given a full diet throughout their lives had died from natural causes, those who had been on the restricted diet were alive and active. As yet, no explanation is forthcoming. Even the fundamental question of whether it is the diet as a whole which is important or one particular aspect of it, is still unanswered. Very obviously, the question of the application of this limited diet to the everyday life of human beings is one which raises a great range of fascinating problems.

We have always been able to think fairly straight where our thinking was not being twisted around by erroneous basic premises. Man, who keeps an eternally sharp eye on whether the next fellow is getting more than he should, has been well aware that some people live much longer than others, and often enough just those who, according to public opinion, shouldn't. The sage pontifications of these ancients on reaching their ninetieth birthday have been very embarrassing to both lay and professional pundits. It is clear, from what they say, that if you want a long life you must trot around the park every day, rain or shine; or, that you have only a certain amount of energy, like a flashlight battery and, therefore, should never take a step unless you have to—get your successive wives to take the steps. It is essential, they assert, that you never swallow a drop of liquor or smoke a cigarette;



or, according to equally impressive evidence, that you should drink as much as you can lay your hands on—it keeps the arteries supple, so they say, and care at a distance; you must eat large gobs of red meat, or be as vegetarian as a canary; you must lead a life of clammy celibacy and read good books; or live to sneer at piker Bluebeard.

Faced with all this, public opinion resolutely refuses to make up its mind. Why should it? Here is a point of view to suit every taste, plenty of powerful evidence to back you up on any way of getting through your years that you fancy.

Anyway, the only common denominator to which you could boil down all these natural histories of senility would be that the surest way to pile up a newsworthy score of birthdays is to be choosy in picking your parents. But not even the quite extraordinary things that we believe about remembering will actually allow us to think that we can slip back into our pasts and light the gleam in paternal eyes of our own selection. So public opinion, in the absence of anything that it can logically do about the business, very reasonably makes the best of it and gallops off in all directions at once to do the things it wants to do, regardless.

To the scientific mind playing over the problem for experimental leads, the extraordinary variations in the apparently natural span of life stand out like a railroad wigwag. Something is happening and where something is happening, then prying fingers usually can make it happen more. It's the things that have no give, no natural variation in their operation, that are hard to get going. Where something shows variation, there is always the chance that you can get your hands on the variant factors and make them work the way you want them to, whether it is the growing of wheat that will ripen before the frost comes, the slow building up of a drug which will kill the syphilis micro-organism and not the patient, or the evolution of dogs with noses as sensitive as cosmic ray counters and tails like umbrellas.

So science sees the fact that one hardy specimen—most usually female—lives to one hundred and two, or with a little lying,

to one hundred and fifteen, and that others get old at fifty and die genuinely senile before sixty, as a thoroughly cheerful, hopeful, come-on wave—variation at work. Something is going on, something that can be taken hold of and manipulated. We don't know what it is, but here are some of the leads that are being traced down and worked with at this stage.

First of all, the oxygen clue. The old man and, more particularly, the old woman, no matter how garrulous, do not use nearly as much oxygen per kilogram body weight as they did when they were young and full of bounce. In part this is because, due to gradual changes in their chests, they are unable to draw in as much air as formerly. In part, it is due to the fact that the iron in their blood, which carries oxygen, is slowly becoming less in amount as years go on, and, in part, it is because (for once the romantic novelist is right) the blood of the older person actually does flow more sluggishly, and therefore oxygen is carried around to the various parts of the body more slowly.

Probably of more importance than all of these reasons, however, is the fact that the older person does not appear to be able to make as much use of the oxygen when finally it is brought to the organs and tissues which need it. The years have brought such changes that he burns more slowly. Thus the problem is not simply one of supplying more oxygen to the older person but, rather, one of finding out why he is not as capable of using it once it has been supplied. Increasing the supply is, of course, relatively easy in these days when the effects of decreased oxygen in the air and of artificially supplied oxygen has been intensively studied in connection with aviation.

Another lead is the gradual drying up of the tissues of the aging person. Once more, lay beliefs in this matter are correct. The references to the dried-up old man and to sere old age are substantiated by actual scientific enquiry. Practically every tissue in the body shows, with the passing of years, a steady loss in water content. But there's no use reaching for the pitcher—a water cure won't start you gathering rosebuds again. The water which

is lost is primarily that which has been bound up in a special way—the colloidal state—rather like the way water is held in a jelly. If the latter is left for a time, the colloidal state breaks down and the jelly loses its water. Indeed, this process is sometimes called the aging of the colloid. The same sort of process goes on in the tissues of the human organism as the years progress. Its great importance lies in the fact that the large majority of all that great array of chemical processes upon which life depends require the presence of adequate supplies of water for their proper functioning. As the tissues become progressively devoid of water, these processes gradually slow down and eventually stop.

In addition to these two great indications of aging, a host of others of possibly lesser importance are now known. Some of these are clearly derivatives of the first two; others, no doubt, have their origin in principles of which we have, as yet, no knowledge.

Among these other changes is the fact that repair of damage to the organism goes on much more slowly in the aged than it did. Recovery from injury and from operation proceeds more slowly and uncertainly, the healing of wounds is delayed. When tissues which have been damaged are finally repaired, one often finds that the new tissue is not of the same quality as that which was destroyed. The highly organized tissue has been replaced by one of a much simpler, less valuable nature—rather like a run in a silk stocking being repaired with cotton or wool.

One finds, also, that the aging body shows great lacks of substances—minerals, vitamins, hormones—which in former years were vital to the vigorous carrying on of life. Often in the case of the vitamins and minerals, it is not that they are lacking from the diet but, rather, that they are inadequately absorbed from the intestinal tract once they have been taken in. This is a matter about which a great deal of confusion still exists. Inside the stomach does not necessarily mean inside the body. Whatever is in the stomach might, for all practical purposes, still be on the grocer's shelf until such time as it succeeds in getting through

the stomach wall and making contact with the tissues where it is actually going to be used.

During the pre-scientific period of enquiry, there were innumerable conjectures and speculation concerning not so much the causes of old age but the ways in which its effects could be set aside. Often enough, these early speculators took refuge in simple fantasy and described spells and incantations by the use of which the individual could be rejuvenated. Some of their theories lay rather more in the realm of the real. They suggested that the breath of young persons had a rejuvenating effect, and many a wealthy, aging individual surrounded himself with young persons for just this reason. It must be recalled that, at that time, the function of breathing was not understood in terms of the taking in of oxygen and the expelling of carbon dioxide. The individual's breath was thought to be actually a vital part of him. His breath, his spirit, and his life were, therefore, identical.

Some of these speculations, while hoary, are also hardy and survive to this time. We have not yet succeeded in making up our minds about them. It is smart to approach these persistent old beliefs with the Missouri rather than the buttoned-up mind. While it is true that most of them are bunk (such as the one that if you rub your warts with a piece of red meat and bury it behind the barn they will go away in three days), there are some startling exceptions. Some of these actually had something to them. This was true in the case of infusion of foxglove, which had been used from time immemorial by country people as a remedy for heart disease. Nineteenth century investigation showed that foxglove contains digitalis and that is why the infusion was so successful.

A warm favorite among earthy-minded men is the hopeful claim that long life is tied up with sexual vigor. It is an exceedingly ancient, if unvenerable, belief. It has been supported by observations that, for some unlucky creatures, the end of the reproductive life is the end of their existence. The first reproduction, or, in the case of the male, the first act of procreation, ends

in death. This cherished belief has also been backed up by the observation that men who lived longer than the average often continued sexually active longer than their less long-lived fellows. Turn this proposition bottom side up and we have: the sickly and the lacking in vigor are disappointed and disappointing in their sexual lives.

As scientific knowledge grew and technical skill increased, it became possible to put these beliefs concerning the relationship of the duration of life and sexual vigor, to actual test. During the latter part of the nineteenth century, Brown-Séquard began to transplant the sexual glands, first from dog to dog, and later from dog to man. He found that if he transplanted the testicles or ovaries from a young animal into an older one, the latter began to grow more vigorous and active. It was not so certain that the animal's duration of life was increased, but he appeared to be capable of greater effort and of greater endurance. There are now recorded several excellent descriptions of older dogs, thus fitted out with a fresh set of sex glands, renewing with all their earlier vigor their chasing of nineteenth century bicyclists and, with still greater zest, potential canine contacts of the hour.

The same renewal of energy and zest was claimed to occur when the sexual organs of animals were transplanted, either in whole or in part, to men. The glands used were first those of dogs and later those of higher monkeys. Actually, while occasional successes were reported, in general the results were disappointing and the procedure has gradually disappeared from use. But before it had finally fallen into discredit, very considerable sums of money had been exchanged for the sex glands of monkeys, dogs, and goats, by men hotly concerned with warding off growing age or declining sexual vigor. It is not clear which, but a choice of the glands of the last-mentioned animal is suggestive.

The disappearance of this pioneer procedure was hurried by our growing knowledge concerning the products of man's own sex glands. This led to our ability to produce them in a

simple form which allowed their administration by mouth or by injection. At first these sex hormones were obtained by extracting them from the glands of animals. Later, as our knowledge grew, it became possible to produce them synthetically. The results with these, too, at least as far as life duration is concerned, have quite failed to substantiate the ancient beliefs. There is no evidence that the individual whose sexual vigor is reinforced by the administration of sex hormones is at all likely to live longer. Indeed, there appears to be quite a possibility that if he is rendered more active and vigorous, the extra drain on his energy actually may cause damage, for instance, by the extra load which it throws upon the heart.

At present, while the problem is not entirely worked out, we are inclined to accept as our working hypothesis the statement that full sexual vigor, as is the case in the manifestation of full efficiency in any field—long distance running, mathematics, maternity or mountaineering—demands that the individual should be in the best possible health in every way.

Having said this, it becomes clear that those persons who are most vigorous and whose makeup is most likely to resist the attacks of time, are just those persons who are likely to be the most potentially active in the sexual field and continue to be so for the longest period of time. We introduce the qualification "potentially" since the development of an active sexual life is dependent upon a great variety of secondary factors. The most important of these, of course, is the matter of attitude. If the individual has been brought up in an atmosphere in which to feel sexually aroused is to feel guilty and if, as a not unnatural consequence, he develops attitudes of anxiety and aversion towards parties and petting, sexual stories, and provocative women, then, clearly, while these attitudes will be unlikely to limit his span of life, they certainly will interfere with the expression of his fundamental sexual vigor.

What, then, can be done at the present time to prolong life? The answer quite simply is, very little. We are just entering the

stage of defining the causes of growing old and any step which we take at this point to attempt to prolong life is largely on the basis of "hunch," and, frankly, is a preliminary attempt to put into action what has been learned about prolonging life in animals.

Accordingly, one finds that increasing attention is being paid to diet in older persons. Moreover, it is now realized that the period when steps to prolong life should be initiated is in middle age, or, at the latest, when middle age is passing over into old age. Once the profound changes—the thickening of the arteries, the bony changes, the deterioration of the tissues of the vital organs—have occurred comparatively little can be done. Starting then in the later years of middle age, increasing attention is being paid to the provision of an adequate diet; in particular, the intake of vitamins is kept up by adding them to the diet.

Also, it has long been known that there is a close correlation between the weight of the individual and his probable duration of life. Indeed, insurance companies will not readily issue a policy to individuals who are overweight in their middle years—hence the daily soul-testing decision: years or butter!

Soaring on the same winds of loose thinking that have kept the old sex-gland hopes aloft so long, other endocrine glands have aspired to be the magic carpet that might carry us across this mountain barrier of age. Because thyroid controls the rate at which we live physiologically and because we clearly slow down as we pass into our anecdotage, thyroid (so runs the thinking) should liven us up, take the tremor out of our heads, the wheeze out of our chests, and leave us sniffing the morning air once more with bright anticipation. Unfortunately, the old saying about new wine in old bottles can be rewritten in modern form to read that you shouldn't put live steam in old pipes—they are likely to burst!

As modern thinking has begun to put man together again, has begun to reassemble all the pieces—mind, body, spirit, soul, higher and lower natures, and what have you—into which early

philosophical and religious meditation had split him, he begins to stand up and say what he really wants. As a man, he has wants over and above what his endocrine glands and his gastrointestinal system may need. If he is to live long, these wants must be met. He must have a sense of security, a feeling of accomplishment, a chance to express himself—a chance denied by an arbitrary retirement age, a policy of early discharge of the elderly.

We recognize these things. Are we building up enough drive and pressure to do anything about them? Probably yes, for to the impetus of scientific enquiry itself is being added a growing exasperation concerning the limits of our lives. At the very time when everything else we do is becoming bigger, bolder, and more full of bounce, our life span, in contrast with our world, is actually growing relatively more cramped.

There has been an enormous expansion of time and space. As we see it now, it was only yesterday that Galileo used one of the first telescopes to discover the satellites of Jupiter and, in doing so, began to open up the limitless ranges in which we now conceive space.

The Piltdown man was brought back into conversation when our grandmothers were dropping their bustles. Our talk about him has blown back the walls of our history from the biblical four thousand to the current anthropological four hundred thousand years.

Man has traded in the concept of himself as a unique and separate creation, in favor of one that shows him as the most potent in a series of living organisms stretching back, species on species, into depths of time which are all but impossible to conceive. He now knows that he lives in a universe boundless in extent and variety, and he is conscious that he has a not incommensurate capacity for invention and for evolution which, he has seen no reason to doubt, will with time allow him to explore and master this boundless universe as he has begun to master the small fragment on which he lives.



In increasing numbers men are able to think, and do think, in terms of a time and space which are endlessly greater than that in which their immediate ancestors thought themselves to work and think and live. But, as yet, modern man has very little longer tenure on his life than he had in the days when he struggled for existence with the sabre-toothed tiger, his neighbor, and the cold. Now that he has exterminated the tiger, beaten back the cold, in those moments that he can get his neighbor's hands off his throat long enough to get his head up and look around, he can see the endless possibilities of the "might be," the "could be," the "will be."

With this has come a pervasive exasperation and frustration which are the harbingers of action. Contrast the calm acceptance of things as they are in the poetry of Ben Jonson, living in a world of known and fixed limits and definite assurance of continued existence, with the pessimism and rebellion of Swinburne and Henley and Housman. The revolt against the limitations of life is spreading. It has not yet crystallized into action but, as in all great events, there is a stirring and a striving for long before final action is precipitated.

As these great forces mount in their intensity, and as we free ourselves from our beliefs that we cannot pass beyond what we have thought of as our predetermined limits, we shall see taking form a concerted attack of the largest scope upon the process of aging.

What do we do about the older person in mid-century? We feed him better but cherish him less. Our industrial culture is hard on him; it rejects him. It says that the old man can't learn, can't keep up, can't adapt. It is true that, with the great scarcity of help in the midst of the War, it turned to him and sought to entice him back to the bench and the desk. It is doubtful, however, whether this change of heart will survive any period of reduced employment.

This dislocation from work of the man in his sixties, often in his fifties, has had most unfortunate effects both on the man

himself and, to a degree, upon our social structure. In order to understand this, we have continually to keep in mind that there has been a relative increase in the psychological importance of the work and community groups over the family group. This has been one of the outstanding aspects of the growth of our industrial civilization. In older days when rural life was the dominant design and when the majority lived on farms or in small towns and villages, the family was a unit of supreme importance. In it, the individual found a great deal of his relaxation, much of his education, most of his security, and almost all his social relations.

With the growth of highly centralized industries, all this has been modified. Reference has already been made to these important changes. Briefly, there has been a trend on the part of the younger members of rural families to go into the cities. City families have become smaller. As industry has grown progressively lighter, it has absorbed more and more women. Family industries, with the exception of the farms, have almost disappeared. Even such essentially family activities as eating together have tended to be displaced in favor of the time- and labor-saving eating in public restaurants. Recreation has very largely left the family, as did education years ago.

Under these circumstances, it is clear that the man must look for his satisfaction in outside groups—particularly in his work and community groups. In the larger centers, the community tends to be much less closely organized and much more shifting than in rural areas, so that the same continuity of personal contacts cannot readily be maintained.

From this quick sweep one can easily see that the man who has been displaced from his work in his fifties or sixties is a man who has few resources upon which to fall back. In recent years this has been manifested by an increasing demand for security. This demand has commonly taken the form of attempts to ensure a financial security by a system of pensions and allowances. While this is certainly a necessary basis for security, it will just

as certainly fail to give him the living thing that he must have. For, even more important than financial security is the need of the individual for social security in the literal sense of the word. He needs to feel that he is part of the group, and he needs to have an opportunity to use those skills which he developed over a long period of time.

One of the biggest advances in knowledge about ourselves made in the last few decades has been our recognition of the basic fact that we are not built to function alone. We need others, we must have affection, we must have a feeling that we "matter to someone," that there is "someone who knew us when. . . ." Prestige, reputation, personality, are names for other forms of the same thing.

Those odd, ideal images of the nineteenth century world—the young man who was last heard shouting "Excelsior!" as he disappeared up the mountain; that strong, silent bore, Byron's ardent misanthrope; and Kipling's hero figure who travelled fastest alone—were the logical products of a period of unparalleled inhibition and denial of some of the most basic trends of human nature.

The healthy man is the man who can mix, who can lead, and who can form part of a team, who can give affection, and who can evoke it.

So, clearly, if you displace the worker from his work group where, as we have shown, he has come to find a growing share of the approval, affection, and sense of belonging which he needs (even the old crab in the office, whom everyone thinks of as that so-and-so, at least has the satisfaction of knowing that people do think about him) you are cutting him off from something which is as essential to his well-being in the long run as are food and water and shelter. Dislocation exposes the older worker to the risk of a second psychological amputation. We cut him off from the doing of those things which have become part of him.

In our thinking about this we have, until now, quite failed

to grasp this fact, namely: that the things which the man has done for many years, the abilities which he has developed, are actually part of his personality organization—part of him, part of his way of expressing himself, of getting satisfaction from living. We have been inclined to look upon them in the same way that we think of his hoe, his wrench, his hammer—things which he can simply put down and walk away from. This is sheer nonsense. He cannot walk away from his ability to build things out of wood, to set up an electric circuit, nor from his satisfaction in doing them. Over the years he has become experienced in doing them. For a long period of time he has expended part of each day thinking about the details of his job, planning the work, apportioning a certain amount of energy for its execution, and, upon its completion, deriving a feeling of satisfaction which is of the utmost importance in the maintenance of good mental health. When this is suddenly cut off, he becomes uneasy and insecure. For many retired workers this feeling deepens into actual anxiety and depression.

Some measure of the effects of this premature dislocation of the man from his job can be seen in the strength of such organizations as the Townsend movement. It is true that, with the increasing absorption of older persons back into industry, this has become of lesser importance, but in the later 1930's it reached a point of very considerable social and political strength. Indeed, it gave a clear indication of a situation which might, and probably will, arise by 1980 if we don't stop shoving more and more older voters out of jobs.

We talk in the kindest way of establishing these oldsters in Sunset Villages and the like. Three decades from now, they will have enough voting power to talk of setting up corrals for Premature Adults. By 1980, the proportion of those over forty-five years of age will have risen from the 1900 level of 17.8% to 40.3% of the total population.

The great importance of this can be pointed up in one sentence. We are entering a period in which our progress in ma-

terial invention has rendered continual change and adjustment in our social organization inevitable, yet the dominant characteristics of the dislocated worker are his desire for security, his conservatism in action.

These characteristics—conservatism, unwillingness to accept and to learn new ways, unwillingness to take a bold course—have been continually ascribed to the older person, and, indeed, have been regarded as the all but inevitable accompaniment of the later years. It would seem, however, that we may be premature in coming to this conclusion. These are more truly the characteristics of the person who suffers from chronic insecurity. And chronic insecurity is, indeed, the common lot of the modern old man.

What would happen to these attitudes if he were rendered secure, if he could be certain that as long as he wanted to work, as long as he was capable of doing a job (either that to which he had become long adjusted or one closely related to it) he could expect employment? If he could know that he would never become dislocated from his social group, would never be in economic straits, what would happen to these characteristics of insecurity? The answers to these questions are still lacking, and without facts one cannot give a satisfactory answer. One can speculate, of course, and there would appear to be some reason to think that the conservatism would subside, but, since the insecurity of the old man is based on many things—his own frailty, his liability to accidents, the approach of his inevitable death—one may well be cautious in concluding that all causes of his insecurity can be controlled. He is slower in learning new techniques, particularly if they have no connection with those which he knew earlier. This is not so apparent if the new technique resembles one which the man used to work on at an earlier time, so that he can call on his wide experience to assist in rapid learning.

Those things which call for making judgments on a group of data, for making comparisons, anything which demands a broad general survey, are carried out rather better by the aged person

than by one of younger years. The proof of the pudding is in the eating thereof, and during the period of wartime employment of all possible workers, including those in more advanced years, we have had a chance to see how far older workers can be used in industry. The answer is that they can be used both to their own profit and to that of the industry concerned.

It seems extremely unlikely that we should ever go back to our former attitudes concerning the older worker, which reached their extremes when it began to be said that a man was "too old at forty." Our new attitude is one which looks to the man rather than to the job. In doing this, we can readily see that it is extremely necessary that the individual should be given an opportunity to express himself in work as long as he is able. Because this is so clearly to his advantage, because it maintains his health in the widest sense of the word, because it prolongs his existence as an individual, active and progressive in outlook, it is also of the greatest value to the community.

From the trends which have already appeared in this field of the employment of the older person, it would seem probable that we may seek a solution in the form of a more searching and extensive job analysis. At present we do not fully understand what jobs call for. Certainly we know many of the characteristics of some jobs, but we have not concerned ourselves with evaluating the job in terms of its meaning for the individual. It has been asserted, for instance, that the person in later years has an understandable preference for work which is centered around conservation. It is also clear that, in the new world, much greater emphasis is to be placed upon the conservation of material resources than has had to be the case during the past century. Under these circumstances, it appears reasonable to conclude that types of work can be identified which the older person can carry on with reasonable efficiency and with great benefit to himself and to his community.

## CHAPTER XI

### *WORK*

WORKING IN ORDER TO LIVE IS LOSING ITS MEANING. IT HAS NOT lost it yet, may never completely lose it, but the bum's claim that the world owes him a living is pretty near to paying off.

In the days of the horse plough and the coach, when candles and cloth and chairs were made in the home, when you clambered out of bed in the dark to relieve the cow and stumbled back again when the moon came out, it was literally true that if you did not work, you did not eat. The margin between man's productive capacity and his consumption rate was small. This margin was narrowed even more precariously by his limited ability to store things. It was only with difficulty that food could be kept from a time of plenty for use during scarcity. This margin of safety was so small that it was continually threatened and often wiped out. A wet summer, an epidemic, the social disorganization produced by one of the innumerable wars, was sufficient to tilt the scales and precipitate a famine.

Wherever industrialization has spread this margin broadens, apparently limitlessly; and industrialization, to the consternation of exporting manufacturers, is spreading everywhere.

If you don't work, you won't starve to death; the welfare and relief agencies will see to that, at least in what remains of the Western world, and tomorrow that will be true of the rest as soon as it becomes organized for permanent peace or for World War III.

But if you don't work, much of living will pass you by. This muddle about work is one of the messes which our rapid industrialization has left on our doorstep. We have no difficulty in recognizing most of these messes for what they are, nor in putting the finger on the party responsible for the squalid housing of our industrial areas, the abuse of child labor, the dust diseases.

But what we are still quite blind to is the more subtle, but potentially more serious, damage done by muddling us up concerning the meaning of work. It is clear that the great majority of people are convinced that work is something to be cut to the minimum. As the hours come down from fifty to forty—and thirty is certainly next on the list—to most people's minds work is something which is exacted as the price of living. But this is not true for all. The writer, the doctor, the lawyer, won't thank you if you tell them that they can work for thirty hours a week only, and that for the rest of the time they are to stay out of their studies, labs, offices, or fields. This is not because they are of a different, purer clay—we are now able to see at least that clearly—but because their work has not been as damaged and mutilated as have almost all industrial jobs below the executive level.

In the process of streamlining, coordinating, integrating, and adjusting industrial work to the machine, that work has become all but clean-stripped of meaning and of psychological significance for the worker. It lies there before him as enticing as a codfish skeleton served on a roof tile.

If you put together the following facts, that with the diminishing significance of family life the work group has become one of the most important sources of social satisfaction, that by far the greater number of industrial jobs are dull, boring, often disagreeable and even psychologically damaging, and our asinine belief that not to work is to enter into bliss, you have the heart of one of our choicest modern muddles.

In by far the greater number of cases the industrial job has become the place where you earn the means to express yourself, to get satisfaction out of life—not on the job, but off it. Hence



the human desire to spend as little time as possible securing that means.

Even yet, however, you can see (at least in vestigial form) the significance that work has and a glint of the satisfaction which it might have. But, for at least two generations, work has been made progressively more meaningless to such a degree that to attempt to show that it need not be so is as easy a job as to sell the idea of tasteless castor oil to a bunch of experienced six-year-olds.

For half a century we have heard the most moving of lamentations from employers, both large and small, over the passing of the old-time worker, the fellow who really loved his work, who hung around until he was satisfied that the job was done, who would lie about at home thinking out ways to do it better, and who ultimately got a testimonial watch after fifty-seven years' service and, perhaps, even a little piece on his gravestone about being a good and faithful servant.

Making all due deduction for the fact that things, like the weather, are never what they used to be, let us say quite emphatically that this kind of worker has not disappeared from the job, it is his kind of job that has done the disappearing. Where the job exists that gives the man what he wants in the way of expression and satisfaction, he will stay with it until the cows come home and long after that.

Even the stripped, fragmented jobs of today give some satisfaction apart from providing a pay check which is to be used in buying psychological needs elsewhere. They provide, to some extent, a source for social interaction, for building up working relations with others. This fact is beginning to get some recognition in the growing realization of the importance of teams and working groups within a plant. Very often these groups take form across the lines of the organization chart, and usually they are considerably more important than the formal set-up. The other side of this is the resentment on the part of the worker when these relations are frustrated and broken up, when em-

ployees are moved around as though they were interchangeable parts, when steps are taken to prevent these informal groupings from taking place. It is quite frankly recognized that union demands (for example, the establishment of the check-off system) on many occasions actually draw their support, as far as the individual worker is concerned, from quite different dissatisfactions, such as the feeling that even though he may be taking home a good wage, he is just a number or a name, that his needs as a person are getting no recognition in the plant. During the war, more than one vitally important industry was seriously crippled through just this failure to plan and organize from this point of view as well as from the strictly technical standpoints.

Distilled into these rarefied concepts are all kinds of experiences and happenings, happinesses, disappointments, scares, and temper tantrums on which we need to reckon if we are going to get any juice out of life at all.

To the boss, the check that the girl at the cashier's desk draws may represent what she gets out of the job. Actually, she gets the chance to see six or seven promising male prospects who check in at her desk for this and that throughout the day. She discusses with the girl who works next to her the miracle of how the boss gets away with what he does; she has a series of fights with that old cat, Miss Schmaltz, who must have been around when the place was built.

Despite the conviction of Cassie, the cashier, that old Miss Schmaltz is simply a dried-up prune, that forty-seven years old lady gets a series of satisfactions out of her position which Cassie will never understand until another twenty-seven years have gone by. She knew the department head when he was just starting out. She has got a position which gives her security and prestige; she is taken in on things which are not for ordinary ears; she is consulted, she is somebody.

The head of the department knows quite clearly that he is getting more out of his job than his pay check. He is getting a chance to express himself, to see his ideas grow into living form.

He has built up the place from scratch. Of course he would have made a better show if he had had the support he should have got from the company, and there is no saying what will happen if office politics go the way they have been going the last year or so, but still, what he has built up is there. Even if it is torn down again with the next palace revolution, still he has had the fun of building.

But these are all office personnel. Their jobs are still pretty intact; they haven't been carved with an eccentric jigsaw to suit the needs of the new process, the latest in machinery; they haven't been speeded up, disassembled and otherwise mutilated as have those of the fellows on the production end.

It is here, on the production end, that it is almost impossible to get anything save a pay check out of the job. What else can you get if your job consists in stacking bottles endlessly in the washer, or in checking the same small screw for flaws nine thousand times a day, or in putting the bottoms on eighteen thousand paper bags each shift, or in installing the same small part interminably on autos passing down the assembly line. Here you simply undertake a fragment of the job that the machine can't do—yet! You work at the machine's tempo, not your own; you stand at the place most convenient for the machine. Your social inter-relations are at a minimum, for all your working relations are not with people but with machinery. Your chances for self-expression are practically nil, for the design is fixed by the machine; whatever standing or prestige you may get from your work is derived from the fact that you are operating the largest, the newest, the most delicate, or the most dangerous piece of machinery.

Hence the conviction that the only thing worth getting out of the industrial job is the pay check. With that in your pants pocket, you can buy the meaningful things of life. In contrast with the farmer, the fisherman, the politician, who get practically all they need out of their working hours, the industrial worker quits living part of each day in order to buy his share in the

remaining hours. Obviously those dead hours are going to be as short as possible.

And the times are with him. Everywhere power is getting cheaper. Once we harness atomic energy to turning nylon spindles, it will be about as cheap as water. Materials are endlessly available; if you can't get the steel, aluminum or magnesium will do, or, perhaps, one of the new plastics, an alloy or glass—or what about pressed wood? How much more one machine can accomplish than ten men, used to be one of the intellectual cocktails of the Victorian industrialist. Now the figure has ascended to the meaningless. Industrialization is springing up everywhere. You don't look for a coal bed or iron deposits; you look for a population to supply whatever labor you need and, above all, to constitute your market.

Everything points in the direction of an endlessly developing capacity to produce, which, of course, simply sharpens the question of where and how the worker is going to do his living. If working hours are going to be kept at their present level, are we going to continue our present policy of psychological stupor for forty hours a week (and it takes awhile to wake up after the stint is done); or, if we reduce his hours, what is the worker going to do with the rest of his time? For, despite the confused and distorted picture which we have of work—equating it with the pay check, seeing it as something from which the worker is to be freed just short of the point at which he would be separated from the pay check as well—actually, it is at our place of work that our best living has to be done. Limitless leisure is no substitute. We can't go on cutting the hours down from thirty, to twenty, to working every so often. We don't want to see a revival of the superficial speculation of the 1920's and '30's as to the possibility of our working for, say five or ten years between the ages of twenty and thirty, and then being "free." Free to do what?—to sit on our beam ends on the rocker or on our heels at dice, to hoe an allotment garden for potatoes that can be produced five times cheaper on a modernized farm? Certainly

the five-year freedom of English miners from mines shut down during the economic depression brought about no joyous bursting out of the human spirit. Those fellows withered like cut vines, as men deprived of work as a means of expression do everywhere.

No, the answer is not in that direction. It is the other side of work which has to be developed. We have been so haunted, and very understandably, by the centuries of scarcity, that we have gone on, far into the industrial period, thinking of work as exclusively a means of production.

Driven by these fears of not enough—not enough to eat, to shelter us, to keep us warm—we have gone on devising better and better methods to produce more and more, until we have jumped over our capacity to consume, until we have had to burn, dump, throw away, until we have had to run great economic risks in endeavoring to absorb our own wartime products into civilian use. Like the fellow who has been knocked about too much, it is hard for us to realize that this round is over. We have won the battle of production.

From here on our objectives are different; our strategy must be different. When the industrial period set in, the machine was the rare thing, the worker the expendable. The machine could only be brought into being in a few crude forms, sources of power were limited, known ways of applying power were few, engineering design was a boy's drawing. Now we can reverse all that if we can see that the next round is to develop the other side of work—to build up work primarily as a means of living and secondly as a means of production.

We can very readily do it. We have the range and flexibility of process, of material, and machine design to make a start. Whatever loss in production might result from making the job fit the man rather than distorting the man to work at the job, is no longer important in view of our immense production capacity. We can absorb the loss. Reasonably enough, we may ask how much increased mechanical efficiency is required to

offset a two months' strike in a ten-thousand-employee plant or in the four-hundred-thousand-worker coal industry.

Can we sketch in the other side of work? It is a new thing, like an unknown coastline shaping up out of the fog. We can pick up the bolder headlines; closer exploration may change our picture, but it certainly would be smart to pay attention to what is looming up, even though the whole may look different when it is charted in detail.

The first thing to put down is that the job should have significance for the worker. This is a difficult proposition right off, for, though we know that making a wheelbarrow can be a satisfying job (especially if the design shows some change and development from one year to the next) we also know that if the job consists only in inspecting the ball bearings that actually go along with the wheel of the modern wheelbarrow, job satisfaction is at a particularly low ebb. Incidentally, there is hardly anything that more shatteringly announces the fact that all things change than the appearance of this venerable companion of man's sweaty hours dolled up like a smart lady and fitted with a pneumatic wheel and lightweight body. Somehow one feels sure that what is almost certainly soon to be called "horsiegrow" should be toted around cellophane-packaged.

Methods for estimating the meaningfulness of the job, the degree of satisfaction which it affords to the worker, will have to be developed. This should not be difficult. Anyone who has held an administrative or supervisory position has already some roughed-out ideas. We can start off by saying that a job, in order to meet these requirements, should involve a diversity of activities. A terrible example of the extreme opposite is that of an intelligent and conscientious man in his early fifties who, during the rushing pressures of the early war years, was given the job of picking up a small part for a carburettor, looking it over for flaws, and then dropping it in the "acceptable" or "unacceptable" container. He did this and nothing else seven thousand times a day, month after month, until he blew up.

Among the many causes of lack of significance, job fragmentation stands out like a sore thumb. Industrial jobs everywhere have been, and are being, broken down according to what the machine can do; the leftover fragments and, the nursemaiding of the machine are given to the worker. There is practically nowhere any recognition of the fact that a job has psychological characteristics and if the satisfactory ones are stripped away until the job stands there stark, with only leftovers hanging on it, then it isn't going to do the worker any good.

What makes one job "complete" in itself, and, therefore, satisfying, and what makes another a fragment in the mind of the worker, is something that still has to be worked out. How important this matter of significance is can be illustrated by the fact that, during the war years attempts were often made by industrial companies to show the worker that the bolts he made fitted into the treads of a kind of tank which was being armed with the new high velocity guns which had already been tried out very effectively in North Africa. Or, he was taken to the actual battle lines and given a chance to talk to the fellows who were using the guns. A high mark of distinction was reached when this problem became the theme of a radio song which ran, "But it's the girl that makes the thing, that drills the hole that holds the spring, that works the Thing-ummy Bob that makes the engines roar."<sup>1</sup>

A job analysis which limits itself to the humidity of the surroundings, the lighting, the number of manual operations per unit of time, amount of lifting, dust pollution and the like, and ignores the psychological characteristics, is in the long run about as useful as a left-legged pair of pants.

Oddly enough, though we have as yet all but ignored this aspect of the job, we have been paying increasing attention for several decades to the matter of personnel selection. This, obvi-

<sup>1</sup> By permission of the Robbins Music Corporation, Sole Agent for North and South America, New York, New York; and Francis, Day & Hunter Ltd., London, England.

ously, is extremely important. Just as obviously, it can't reach its real significance until we know for what kind of job we are selecting the worker.

The second characteristic of the other side of work is that jobs should run, as far as possible, at the worker's natural tempo and not at one arbitrarily fixed by the machine or by other workers. (Naturally adjustment has to be made for the needs of team work.) This proposition is not as soft as the hard boiled foreman might think. There are many jobs which are unsatisfactory because their tempo is slower than that of the worker. Apart from this, if he is operating at a purposely slower rate than his normal, there is certainly nothing lost if this fact is brought out into the open and everybody knows why the slowing down is going on, rather than having the whole issue obscured by trying to force a faster tempo.

The third field which we have got to enter in order to build up the missing side of work looks extraordinarily fertile and seems to have all kinds of possibilities, not only for our working hours but for all of our life. It is that of the sociological structure of the plant as a whole, and, in particular, of the group of which the individual worker is a part. We have known for at least two decades that the organizational chart that hangs in the vice-president's office tells only part of the story and from the point of view of the satisfaction of the worker that part is almost vanishingly small. The kind of organization of personal relationships which exist between workers and foremen and between workers and higher levels cuts right across the lines of responsibility outlined in the vice-president's chart, and, at least for our purposes, is much more fundamental.

During the last half decade when the relationship of morale to output began to get the recognition it deserved, the most extraordinary contrasts were seen. One found large modern plants, specially designed from the point of view of light, heat, humidity, and noise, in which morale was at a very low ebb. Grievances hung over the staff like a cloud of lakeshore mos-



quitos; absenteeism and sickness rates were away up; hostility between groups and between individuals was high and the output trailed behind like a balky dog.

On the other hand, you might find a small grimy shop, with cobwebs on the windows and dust everywhere, but the whole place rocking under an intensive drive on everyone's part to get things done.

Now this does not mean that if you clutter up the shop, quit washing the windows, and put forty watt in the place of hundred watt bulbs, morale will improve. Far from it; for, by and large, good working conditions represented by good lighting, reduction of noise, protection from dangerous machinery, contribute to good morale. But they are not identical, and thus far we have not settled down seriously to the business of trying to figure out what makes up the most efficient organization of human relations within an industry.

We do know, of course, that a difficult foreman or supervisor can wreck the effectiveness of a group. We have reached the point where we are willing to attempt to apply modern selection methods in choosing the foreman. We are not yet willing to recognize that people considerably further up the managerial tree can be even more disruptive—that comes a little too close to home.

This matter of the organization of human relations is like Alice's Looking-Glass Land—the further into it you get, the curiouser and curiouser it becomes, mainly because the things you find are apt to contradict so heartily the principles upon which we have worked until now. For instance, we have all claimed, at least until fairly recently, that a large plant is more efficient than a small one—your overhead is better spread. Indeed, up until lately, we would have said that the larger the plant, the more efficient. In the last few years the economic experts have begun to back down a bit, for reasons that they don't seem to be able to find the right words to express. Is it because the reasons do not lie in the territory of costs, prices,

overhead, and depreciation? Industrial psychologists and personnel workers think so, and say so flatly. When you increase a plant beyond a given size, you begin to break down something which is extremely important, namely, face-to-face relations between top management and the fellow at the bench.

When, during the war, small non-essential industries were closed down everywhere and men came from them to work in the mammoth war factories, one heard again and again the complaint that they felt lost, that they didn't know of whom to ask questions, to whom to make complaints and, more subtle still, they didn't feel that they mattered to anyone. The bigger the organization, the greater the anonymity; the more tenuous the personal contact between top management and the worker, the more intense the hostility. Now this doesn't mean that a plant has to be kept small enough so that the boss can go around and call everyone by his first name every morning so that they will feel good and work hard, but it does mean that one has to recognize that the size of a plant presents a very definite psycho-sociological problem, and that that problem, like those of the sales, the finance, and the production departments, requires an answer if one is going to have an efficient organization.

The fourth field to be added to our picture of the other side of work is the recognition of psychologically dangerous trades. At first sight, it seems odd that we should only now start to see what has been under our noses for so long. Certainly the fact that they would have to do something about it made a number of industries slow in recognizing the dust diseases, the dangers to which men working with lead and arsenic were exposed, the skin diseases produced by irritating chemicals, the hazard of carbon monoxide, and a score of other industrial gases. But they have been recognized, and progressive industrialists were among those who took the lead in putting through the necessary protection and the legislation to see that protection stayed put. And that was decades ago.

The psychologically dangerous trades are only now being rec-

ognized for the same reason that recognition of the psychological factor was delayed until the last decade or so in every other field of human relations—in medicine, in the armed forces and in everyday life. So long as we split ourselves up into the ancient mind/body duplex, so long as we talked about higher and lower natures and attempted to understand human behavior in moralistic terms, we were obviously going to have difficulty in seeing cause and effect at work in human behavior. The idea of “will-power”—that a man could change his behavior patterns overnight by the exercising of this magic capacity, that if he was strong he could resist all environmental pressures, that he could “snap out” of his troubles—all represented a way of thinking about human behavior that made it very difficult for us to sit down and look at things as they really are and attempt to change circumstances around so that we might, in turn, produce changes in the behavior with which we were concerned.

But as our new viewpoints take hold, we are slowly beginning to recognize the psychologically dangerous occupations. There are many of these—jobs which result in considerable mental and social ill health, some of it transitory, much of it permanent.

In looking at what we have now begun to identify, it should be remembered that it is not the specific job that we have discovered to be psychologically hazardous but a characteristic of it, and that this characteristic may be found in quite a number of different jobs. Wherever it appears, it is apt to be dangerous.

A second thing to remember is that what we are talking about is like a pair of scissors: there are two sides to it, and if one is missing, nothing much can happen. The other side is the personality of the worker. Some workers are more likely to succumb to psychologically dangerous occupations than others, just as some can't stand working in a dust-polluted atmosphere, and some have skins more sensitive to irritant dyes than others.

Here are five characteristics which, if present in any job will make it extremely hazardous to some workers and potentially hazardous to many more. The first is a tempo which is way above

or way below that at which the worker normally operates. Then comes monotony—the monotony of the dull, boring job that fails to hold the full attention of the worker. The third dangerous characteristic is “fragmentation” with its subsequent failure to give the man a feeling of having completed a meaningful piece of work. The fourth consists in the exclusive and intense utilization of only a limited part of the equipment of the individual. Finally, there is the lack of satisfactory human relations in the set-up of the group or department in which the job is being carried out.

Perhaps it is the fact that the tensional states present such an embarrassing contradiction to existing beliefs that has resulted in their being among the earliest to be recognized as arising in consequence of exposure to psychologically dangerous occupations. For it is precisely those people to whom the older concepts of human behavior have enthusiastically accorded a pat of approval who have been the most apt to develop tensional and anxiety states while carrying on certain types of occupation. The overly conscientious, precise, meticulous individual is now recognized as someone who is apt to break down if placed in jobs which call for work at speeds beyond his normal tempo, in jobs which are not only highspeed but repetitive, and in jobs which call for the continuous employment of a limited part of his psychological equipment.

This was the case with a young man, ambitious to get enough money gathered together to start him in his own small business, but tense, precise, and meticulous in his way of working. He was put to work on a machine which produced a small part for an electric motor. Every few months the design was changed a little and the machine had to be set up differently. Once set up, his job was a matter of feeding in the material with one hand and sorting out the finished part with the other ten seconds later. He said that the setting up of the machine was all right, and producing the new design for the first few days was also all right, but going on doing the same thing every ten seconds for weeks

and months became more than he, or for that matter anyone else on the job, could stand. This, as a matter of fact, was generally recognized. The boss said that he knew no one could stand doing such repetitive work hour after hour, and, it was understood that the machine could be closed down every so often and the worker could walk around and talk and kid with the other fellows in the shop. But eventually his tension rose to such a point that, despite the fact that he was making good money and his savings were reaching the point where he could hope to rent the premises where he planned to start his own business, he couldn't face the job any longer and had to come for treatment.

Very much the same is true of a twenty-two-years-old girl who had to stamp a design on handkerchiefs several hundred times a day. Here, too, it was recognized that one just couldn't go on doing that throughout the day, and the girls were allowed to stop, to go powder their noses, smoke a cigarette, and talk about the boy friend every so often.

We have already referred to the especially conscientious and reliable man who had the job of checking over nine thousand small carburettor parts a day for flaws, and the woman who pasted the bottoms on eighteen thousand paper bags during her day's shift. These instances could be multiplied endlessly. The results are unpleasant—the tension and anxiety, the inability to concentrate, to go into crowds, the sleeplessness, the fears and the depressions, are among the most distressing of human ills. Often the patient will say that he could bear it if he had a broken leg, or pneumonia, or even cancer, but this other is too much. What he has to bear is bad enough but, for the very reason that he is apt to be an unusually conscientious person, he is only too likely to drive himself to continue at work long after his symptoms have appeared, to think himself a weakling if he seeks medical care. So that, often enough, he stops only after his condition has become all but irreversible. As yet, neither industry nor the general public realizes the number of such potentially valuable persons who become permanently damaged,

lost to industry and, much worse, lost to themselves and their families through exposure to such psychologically hazardous occupations.

Some years ago, reports began to appear that occupations which were monotonous, repetitious, which did not demand the worker's full attention, but which, nonetheless, never let him feel entirely free at any given moment, had a curious effect upon his thinking. He became more sensitive; things which formerly might have made him momentarily angry and exasperated, and then would have been forgotten, began to stay with him. He began to feel that he was being put upon, that the foreman was playing favorites. He began to ruminate over this and eventually built up a long story in his mind of the mean treatment he had been given. These reports were never confirmed. It is certain, however, that anyone who has held an administrative position has run across problems of just this kind and has been amazed to see the way in which a whole series of little incidents—a misunderstood word, a moment of irritation on his part, a necessary concession to another worker—have been strung together and have been kept as fresh and painful in the employee's mind as on the day they appeared, through his continual mulling over them.

A third dangerous characteristic of jobs is "fragmentation" to which reference was made in sketching in the missing side of work. There is an analogy here with the curious danger of polished rice. As long as those people for whom rice was the main part of their diet ate the old unpolished variety, all went well but when machinery was invented which stripped away the outer covering and produced the much more attractive looking, silver, glistening grains, then beri-beri stepped in. In stripping away the husk, essential vitamins were lost and the people began to suffer from the "hidden hunger" of vitamin deficiency. In just the same way the modern industrial job has been stripped of psychologically satisfying components and a great many workers suffer from resulting psychological "hidden hungers."

Rather different, though related, is another curious tendency to twisted thinking which is apt to appear wherever an organization becomes so large that those at the bottom of the hierarchy lose personal contact with those at the top who are making the decisions. It doesn't matter whether the organization is a nurses' home, a medical school, an army, or an industrial plant; those at the bottom tend to be swept from time to time by feelings of hostility towards the top level and to entertain the most unfounded beliefs about them. The tighter the discipline and the more remote the top level, the more fantastic the beliefs tend to be. For this reason in general, the things that pupil nurses are inclined to believe about the superintendent of nurses are somewhat worse than those which medical students believe about their professors—or is this self-deception? At least it can be said that the medical graduate, having climbed up the hierarchy himself, can meet his old teachers with equanimity and even friendliness, but he has to struggle hard to see that those long suffering and well deserving ladies, the superintendents of nurses, actually are not equipped with horns and a tail, so fervently had those bright companions of his youth, the pupil nurses, believed that very thing.

Upon a fifth kind of psychologically dangerous trade we have already touched. These are the occupations which call for the prolonged use of a limited part of the equipment of the individual—the telegrapher working the keys with the fingers of one hand, the endless sorting out of different kinds of bolts. Contrast this with the most common occupation of a century ago, farming. Here, during the course of the day, the man might hitch up his team, plow, or dig, feed the stock, milk the cows, do some carpentry around the barn, or cut back the hedges. Among people using such a range of their human skills and equipment one does not find the tensional states, the anxieties, that are apt to appear in those who use intensively the small range of their equipment some modern industrial jobs call for. We do not yet know the reason, but it is part of old

wisdom that a change is as good as a rest; that, in ways still to be worked out, to shift from one kind of skill to another prevents the dangerous rise in tension which is the bane of so many industrial workers.

What can we do about it? The first thing is to recognize that occupations can be psychologically hazardous. This is not just a matter of recognizing another group of industrial hazards; that is now easy for us. We took in our stride the fact that the perfecting of the atomic bomb would bring with it a number of new risks to the health of the scientists involved, from the radiation produced. Though these hazards had never been encountered before, they were so easily accepted by us that means to prevent them were actually worked out ahead of time.

With the psychologically hazardous occupations it is different. We have to shift our basic premises. We have to look at human beings in an unaccustomed way and that is hard. However, once recognition is achieved, it looks as though the remedies may not be too hard to find. Most of the ill effects from these occupations seem to appear in people having clearly recognizable kinds of personality—the over-conscientious, the worrying, the sensitive. Well trained personnel can readily screen out such unstable persons and place them in occupations which do not carry these hazards. A second line of attack is upon the occupations themselves. There is no reason why many of them should not be modified to remove most of their risk.

This chapter opened with the bald statement that if you didn't work, you wouldn't die, and then with admittedly annoying double talk snatched the illusory prize away by saying that if you didn't work you wouldn't live as a man, though you might as a turnip or as the all but obsolete coupon clipper.

We have won the age-old battle of production, for, though there are still immense unsatisfied markets, we have now achieved the know-how. We can easily produce all that the odd two billion non-cooperating members of this One World can use to



warm, cool, or amuse themselves with. And we are going to require fewer and fewer people to produce it.

Then what about this business of working in order to live—to express ourselves, to satisfy our need for human relations, for prestige, for our urge to create and control things?

There is an answer, though not an easy one to put into action. Occupations fall into three major fields—agricultural production, industrial production, and services. Before the war, the number of people in industrial occupations was already beginning to fall relative to the total number employed, the number in agriculture was static, but the number in the service occupations was rising—those engaged in retail selling, pants pressing, social service work, transportation, recreational occupations. The probability is that these service occupations will be enormously expanded. The main obstacle seems likely to be the development of the necessary economic concepts to secure their financing. Up to now, with the exception of a few ancient and time-honored service occupations such as transportation and amusement, our economic concepts have centered around agricultural and industrial production.

But it is difficult to imagine that such an innately aggressive and adaptive creature as man will be willing to retire to the front parlor after having solved the problem of getting enough to eat and wear. Fifty years ago an increased drive towards slum clearance, road building, and pest control had already set in. The sensitive have even now begun to enjoy in anticipation the clearing out of the mosquito, the black fly and the “no-see-um,” with ragweed and poison ivy thrown in. Having now got ourselves out in the country with plenty of time and limitless resources, let’s look around. At the risk of being howled at as a Philistine, the opinion might be ventured that Nature’s handiwork could stand a lot of improvement. In days gone by, when we got sufficiently flush we used to landscape our gardens. Now that we are going to be so infinitely more affluent, what

about landscaping the landscape? It is hard to deny that a number of hills are distinctly lumpish, that what might be interesting and imposing headlines waver into the sea like an ex-pugilist's nose. Quite indisputably, Old Lady Nature's efforts at growing trees are not what they might be; the unbiased observer must be gravely concerned to note the very large number of underprivileged and downright scrawny individuals among the members of even the better set up spruce forests. Unregulated competition between assorted trees, vines, creepers and bushes may result in the survival of the fittest, but the survivors look very much like survivors and give no promise of looking any better.

All this will sound like horrid sacrilege to those who love things as they are. We can take heart and lift our shamed heads if we reflect that where we have needed something, we have not hesitated to tinker around with it and try to improve it. Witness the cow and the horse. Though many people of pronounced aesthetic turn of mind have published their reflections upon the nobility, and various other aspects, of the horse, it is hard to recall having heard any yearnings for that creature in its unimproved, primeval form.

## CHAPTER XII

### *OURSELVES*

WHEN WE THINK ABOUT OURSELVES, TWO AGE-OLD GUIDES—plausible, but, even as guides go, unusually ill-informed—step forward with the offer to direct us. It does not lessen confusion that they tell us to set off in diametrically opposite directions. The first declares, with pompous certainty, “You cannot change human nature”; the second pontificates, “You are what you make yourself.”

What do we mean by “human nature”? It is a loose, sloppy term fingered over by countless minds until it has lost its sharp edges. To give a complete definition of what is meant by it is impossible. You might as well try to measure how high “up” is, or how far off “away” might be. Suppose we take a few of the things which men say about the nature of their fellows. In particular let us take those things they say when they are in a fit of temper and which, because they are heartfelt, are believed quite erroneously to represent the naked, shivering truth unclothed by even the scantiest rags of humbug, nonsense, or hope of further gain.

“All men are liars” is a time-honored ending to domestic discussion. Theoretically that is probably true, and no discredit to men, either. For truth is an exceedingly elusive thing. With the imminent disappearance of the idea of final truths, we have got to become accustomed to the idea that it is always on the

move. Like the bluebottle, it was obviously here a moment ago, but it is certainly somewhere else now.

This, however, is pretty poor stuff to rely upon in an argument. It takes too long to bring it out and it requires a quiet mind to accept it. Anyway, it doesn't quite meet what your glowing-faced accuser has in mind. What he, or most commonly she, means is that being in full possession of what she calls the true facts, you have the gall, dishonesty, and general perfidy to present her with this poor, disjointed product of a dull imagination in an effort to ward off the fate which should, and will too, so justly descend upon your head.

But if, when the shouting and the tumult dies away, you care to think over this basic statement that "all men are liars," you will find that it affords curiously little final support to the assertion that you can't change human nature. For, while it is probably true that all men lie a little, it is also true that the amount of lying can be readily increased or decreased by circumstances. For instance, lying may become something of a civic virtue. The Dutch, during the recent occupation of the Netherlands by the Nazis, considered that misinforming or misdirecting their enemies was praiseworthy. Where children are brought up astride two conflicting cultures, as is the fate of first generation immigrants, it is obvious that, seeing what is considered a sin and a shame in one is often enough a virtue in another, they are going to have difficulty in being sure what is truth and, what matters more, in being certain that it is important. It is a matter of fact that the children of immigrants have a greater record of anti-social behavior than either their own parents or their own children.

Take almost anything that is said to be part of human nature and you will see, not a rigid, unvarying hallmark stamped upon man's hide at some remote foundation ceremony but a central tendency capable of the most considerable and all but endless modification. After all, that's how we got where we are—the proud and undisputed masters of the world, which we may

blow to pieces next Monday at nine A.M. Man's nature has been very, very tough, but very, very plastic.

Take anxiety. Until lately we have tried to conceal the fact that we lose our appetite, wet our socks, get a quavering note in our voices and a pounding in our chests as a common human reaction to threatening danger. We now recognize that there is a general tendency to do just those things when we are waiting to be fired, to sit an examination, to go to our first party, or when we sit and wait after the buzz-bomb engine stops.

But it is a trend and not a rigid, unvarying response. There are plenty of records of people filled with zeal and ecstasy who have faced the certainty of death without any apparent fear whatsoever. There is just as ample a record of the great increase in the tendency to be afraid which results from experiencing too much for too long, or which results from social disorganization.

Take another segment of human nature. A woman came to the hospital one day recently, depressed, uninterested, hoping that she would die, imagining that others were attempting to strangle her. As she recovered under intensive therapy, a very human story pieced itself together. She was a dependent girl who had left a home unhappily dominated by a sadistic alcoholic father when she was sixteen to marry an easygoing, kindly young painter's assistant. They got on well until the outbreak of war, when he joined up and went overseas, where he remained for six years. Her life was profoundly shaken by his going. She was moody and lonely for awhile. Then she took over a few jobs and felt rather better. Just before his return, the husband wrote saying how much he was looking forward to coming back to live with her and the children again, but he felt that he couldn't do it with an easy mind without telling her—he was afraid that someone else would—that he had been living with a girl in Europe for the last year and a half.

Now, he would be a bold man who would try to maintain, especially to an audience of indignant women, that this woman's

reaction to the news was anything but right, proper, and the way any normal, decent, respectable human being would react. It is generally and stoutly maintained that women always have felt, and always will feel, that way about such scoundrelly behavior. But, without any claims to unnatural boldness, one must say that if the ladies are not wrong, they are also not altogether right. They are correct as far as women brought up in our culture and perhaps even more right concerning women brought up in our culture of fifty years ago. But they are not right about women living in all cultures. Actually, what we are talking about is not really an innate part of human nature, but something which depends upon the way in which the woman has been brought up, upon the kind of culture or civilization in which she lives.

There are plenty of records of cultures in which it has been customary for men to have more than one wife, and less numerous ones of cultures in which women, by custom, had more than one husband at a time. Infuriating though it may be to the enthusiasts for our own times, we have got to say that it seems to have worked in its day and time all right. Certainly there is no record of the women of those periods flocking in overwhelming numbers to consult the medicine men of the day.

Actually there is no need to look very far for illustrations to show up the first of our doddering old guides. Man, with his capacity to adjust himself to any kind of living between the poles and the equator, with the enormous range of designs for the family, for the community, for bringing up children which he has tried out is an unanswerable proof of the plasticity of his own nature. The old whine—for whining complaint it is—that you can't change human nature comes primarily from those people who have failed to adjust themselves, or, more often, from those who have allied themselves with impossible concepts of human behavior and motivation. For instance, the weird "will-power" beliefs, which would have the man standing unmoved in the midst of social and environmental pressures to which he

must react if he is to control them. It would be as realistic to imagine him standing sweatless in a Washington summer or shiverless and shelterless in a Labrador winter.

Learning—in other words, modifying behavior by experience—is the root of our triumph over our world. This ability to learn a new way, to avoid a danger after one, two, three, or, at the most, a few experiences, has succeeded where the tusks, the wings, the poison fangs, strength, armored skin, speed, or any other of the endless inventions of our kindred living creatures has failed or, at best, met with limited success.

There is no other creature which requires as few repetitions of the same experience to enable it to learn to adapt its behavior. To this great gift was added, at some unknown but remote period in our million-year history, another ability—that of going over a pending situation in our minds and of working out ahead of time possible ways of dealing with it. This ability to set up models of events to come in our heads and to work out plans for dealing with them in our minds without having to take the consequences of the mistakes which might lie in those plans, was an immense advance.

What are the possibilities of modifying our ability to learn by experience? This is a red-hot, live question. For, quite apart from the rather academic enthusiasm which we may feel for something which has put clothes, rather than scales or hide, on our bodies, which has put a roof over our heads rather than a burrow in the cliff side, and an automobile under us rather than four fast-moving legs, we can clearly see that in competition with our fellows it is this ability that makes the most difference. By and large, despite taxes, caste systems, and the police, it is the fellow who is able to think fast and be right the first time who gets his hands on the steering-wheel and his name in the headlines—or not, as he wants, according to his sense of discretion.

Around this question of whether we can modify this supremely important capacity there have raged lively, wordy battles. Upon

man's hope that it may be possible, charlatans have built profitable little businesses— "You may be a mental giant and not know it. Send \$10.00 for our handbook which will show you how you can release the dynamite in your personality. Be dominant, be a success, send us \$10.00!" Some measure of scientific agreement has been reached in the statement that man's actual ability to learn is always potentially greater than the amount of that ability he is able to call upon from day to day. But whether this full ability is much greater than the intellectual horsepower that we actually use from hour to hour throughout the day is still a somewhat cloudy question. To keep the issue from getting snarled up in our minds, let us restate it. Everyone, from kindergarten teachers to earnest students of the national currency, is agreed that practice makes perfect, whether we practice adding glass beads or zeros to checks. This, however, is not an increase in the ability to learn but simply an increase in skill. What mankind is itching for—it is already in our fairy tales, so we are going to make it come true—is some way of increasing our ability to learn, so that when we take up shorthand, flying, gin rummy, or Russian we can learn faster with less practice.

This is clearly one of our V.I.P.'s to be placed alongside those other Very Important Projects over which we have fantasied, put into fairy tales, dwelt upon in science fiction, and worked hard over—atomic power, which we now have; the creation of life, which we seem to be on the point of accomplishing through our study of viruses (those curious things which lie between complex but non-living chemical compounds and the simpler forms of living organism); and the control of gravity, which apparently is still distant.

If we had to place the probability of our being able to increase our capacity to learn, we should have to put it at the end of our V.I.P. series. There is still an appalling amount of nonsense to throw out before we can even get at the problem.

For instance, there is the well-entrenched idea that the highly



intelligent child—the kind that doesn't have to be shown twice, who can't be fooled by humbug for very long, who asks embarrassing questions—is inclined to be sickly, lopsided, and just a little queer. This seems to be a hangover of the old fear of ability and knowledge. In the static medieval period, people who saw things differently were a menace to be chased down, excommunicated, incarcerated, burned. A number of the old alchemists and necromancers were undoubtedly crackpots and quacks, but equally certainly some of them were early rebels against the existing order who were fumbling around to gain better answers than those provided by the rigid strait-jacket of their times. Driven into secret and furtive ways to protect themselves against persecution, it is little wonder that many of them seemed to have become a little strange and odd.

Actually, the facts about the intelligent are quite different. The outstandingly able child is bigger, stronger, more athletic, less liable to illness, and generally more rugged than the mediocre and very much more so than the real dumbbell, who is exceptionally clumsy, muscularly weak and prone to all kinds of illness, to which, once contracted, he does not stand up at all well.

True enough, our culture can, and still does damage many of our ablest youngsters. We force them to keep step with the slow-moving average. When the latter are learning to count on their fingers, the bright youngster wants to be doing crossword puzzles; when his schoolmates have reached the crossword puzzle stage, he wants to know all about jet propulsion and frequency modulation. If we frustrate him enough, if we let the little demons of the playground express their resentment of his brains by telling him that he is "queer," then the chances are that we may build up neurotic mechanisms.

Human nature can be changed all right. The vociferous disagreement between the two guides whom we left standing in the middle of the first paragraph of this chapter comes right out of their own muddleheadedness. Human nature does change, but

it changes in adaptation to the varying demands of our private worlds. The muddleheadedness of the guides is kept going by the fact that they themselves are related to certain of the unfortunate myths which still haunt our lives—essentially dull, stupid, wearisome things. To be related to them is condemnation itself. But related they are; guides and myths hang together for mutual support against change, progress, and wider days.

The first assertion that human nature cannot be changed is related to that family of particularly unpleasing myths which the moralists invented to excuse their own failure to deal with human nature. The kingpins of that family were predestination and original sin. They proclaimed that from the beginning some people were destined for destruction, others for a rather grudging salvation; that all, including the newborn child, were guilty of "sin" because of the unsatisfactory behavior of that mythical couple in the Garden of Eden. And they backed up their assertion most unswervingly with social ostracism, with tortures and burnings, with refinements of terror and horror which have only been duplicated by the Nazis and the Japs.

The second assertion, that we are what we make ourselves, has a rather mixed parentage. On one side it is curiously enough related to the unprepossessing family at which we have just looked, for, like all families of myths, this one contains bedfellows which at first startled glance leave us dumbfounded. If they weren't snugly there before our own eyes, we should never have believed that they could be got to lie under the same set of blankets together. Men were not only predestined, but, nonsensically enough, were to be punished for what they did. It is to that member of the family that our second assertion is related. It is also related to a more pleasing and modern family of myths which was founded about the middle of the eighteenth century and was influential in the French and American revolutions. This family asserted that men were their own masters; they were completely free in their choices and actions; any man could become anything; all men were equal. This, very clearly and indubitably,

is not in accord with the facts. There are great and considerable inequalities in the natural endowments of men. It is true that circumstances and our own desires can go far to remedy these differences, but they cannot be entirely overcome; our present knowledge, at least, is not sufficient. Indeed, the most recent research appears to indicate that compensatory gifts to those who have been given a poor hand at the original deal are not common. By and large, the intelligent boy is also the larger and stronger; he tends to be the more industrious, the better socially adjusted, the more ambitious and persevering.

Both guides are wrong. If we want to know more about human nature, we must turn and look at ourselves as squarely as our myths will let us.

Let us pick out a problem at random from that living fabric that streams through the psychiatrist's office, morning, noon, and night. Let us see how much of it we can understand, how much of it we can start in to work with directly. To what extent do we find that we have first of all to change over our whole way of thinking before we can make a beginning? In the clumsily-built cars of the first decade of the century, half the motor had to be dismantled in order to change a spark plug or do a simple job of cleaning the carburettor. In just the same way, many of the difficulties that people have could be adjusted early enough if they were not fenced off by unwieldy, antiquated taboos, by massive and all but immovable social customs and prohibitions which are stoutly pinned down by those who have most to gain by so doing.

Let us take a look at this chance fragment of mid-century living which we have picked out. It is spun about a woman, appropriately as old as the century and about as confused, muddled, and frustrated. Indeed, her primary reason in trying to get help in disentangling things is her pervasive feeling that life has lost its enticement and, indeed, its significance. She sees no reason in going on; she wants to die. She had tried; she had taken an overdose of barbitol, but it had not been enough. There had been

times during the last two or three years when she had taken the car out along where the railroad ran parallel to a country road of which she was fond, hoping that she might make up her mind to cut across in front of an oncoming train. But she felt that it was cowardly, that she, Betty Wilkins, could not do that. She was, she thought, at least as sturdy a person as the other women she knew who had come this far through life. She had her pride in having managed the business of living, at least up till now; to succumb now would be weakness. It would be hard on her husband; there were no children now, but for that very reason her husband depended the more on her.

Maybe her mother or her grandmother would have felt that they should not put an end to things because it would be a sin, but that weighed little with Betty. Some of her friends still went to church, and she did too—after all, her family had always been steady churchgoers. But her remaining beliefs had become intellectualized and her religious customs had passed over insensibly to the aesthetic. She liked the music and the atmosphere and the people she met. Long since she had made her own selection of what her well-read mind would accept. Hell fire and purgatory were really too gruesome; besides, one knew now, as grandmother never seemed to grasp, that there had been scores and hundreds of different kinds of religions, and they couldn't all be right. Still, there was quite a bit of Christian teaching that she thought was sound; you needed something of that kind to keep people together. And, at least until it was clearer that there was nothing to it, certainly it was much more pleasant to go on thinking that there might be survival in some form or other after death.

So these motivations and, perhaps more important than all, the strong urge to go on living which lies below all intellectualizations, kept her going and brought her at last to see if she could find out what to do.

Betty was a pleasant little person, charming if not quite

pretty, sociable, friendly, and a little snobbish. She played games well enough to be accepted into the group of mid-passage ladies who twice a week spent a couple of hours at the Club trying to keep fit by taking a course in calisthenics, swimming, and not too strenuous badminton. Her husband had a managerial post in a grain business. His income was enough to let them have a comfortable five-room apartment, to go out to dinner and a floor show every so often, to throw the occasional cocktail party, to give good presents to themselves and to one or two close friends, to save for retirement.

She had been born in a small town in France where her father was a lawyer; her mother was a Dutch woman who had been sent for a final year or two of schooling in a nearby college. When Betty was four, her mother died of diphtheria and the little girl's world was badly shaken, since she had depended much more upon her mother than upon her aloof and perpetually busy father.

A succession of housekeepers passed through her life. To them she could form no lasting attachment. She began to depend more and more upon her father, who, lonely himself, spent more time with her. As a young man he had lived for a time in Canada and had always had a dream of going back there to settle. He wove this into his stories to his little daughter—when she was a little bigger, they would both sail across to Canada and she would keep house for him.

But when she was entering her 'teens, her father married again. Here the troubles which had begun to take form with her mother's death suddenly broke into the open. It was incredible, this marriage; it was a betrayal by the only person she had. There was no future, the dream was ended. Pride and the hour to hour satisfactions which are more plentiful in our 'teens kept her going on, but she had been badly frightened. Like everyone, she needed affection—a sense of belonging, of mattering, of security. From here on, anything that threatened any

source of affection which she might find would revive all the old fears of hopelessness and uselessness which had swept over her when she learned that her father was to remarry.

Here you can see unravelling one of the main motifs of unhappiness in our times—the lack of a feeling of belonging, of being part of a closely united group. The growing tendency of modern woman to seek not a home or a career, but both is accentuating it. Transient housekeepers and nurses, or the anonymity of the staff of a home for children, is no substitute for the stability afforded by two parents in the home. Yet this trend towards the industrialization of women will go forward. Here is a place where good designs for living have to be worked out.

Betty's life from childhood on was dominated by her panicky need for affection and her drive to protect herself from being hurt again. She tried to develop a relationship with her mother's family, who had drifted away after the latter's death over a decade previously. She succeeded only in discovering that she had become the center of a fierce, inter-family quarrel. To protect herself, she determined to become independent and ultimately became a dress designer of some ability. In pursuit of the dream that her father had told her so often, she crossed to the United States where, very lonely, she married in haste a young man who suffered from a mother fixation, had no affection to offer Betty, and quite frankly said that he had married her for her capacity to support him and his mother. This ended in divorce, and there was a further period of city loneliness, of men who wanted only passing relations with her, of success at her work which failed to satisfy, of a longing to "go back" but a knowledge that there was nothing to which she could go back. There was a renewed contact with an old friend of her childhood and a second marriage. This, while more successful than the first, had hidden but serious flaws which led directly to the hopelessness which brought her so nearly to ending her life.

Her second husband was a good man, in the conventional

sense of the word. He was faithful, he drank only in moderation, was well thought of by his business associates, came home, went out, got up, lay down, at the duly appointed times. But he himself had had an unhappy childhood and had grown up a deeply repressed person, with the concealed hostilities that many repressed people have. He could not let himself go, he was shy with strangers, Betty's sociability embarrassed and frightened him. He tried, and gradually succeeded in his aim, to force her to conform more and more with his highly regulated way of living; he cut off her spontaneous social contacts. There were two children, but they died early. And when, feeling her world tightening around her, she wanted to make a return to her work, her husband met this by criticizing her capacities and by declaring that, in his code, the man should provide for the household and that it would make him look ridiculous in the eyes of his friends if she worked.

So Betty found herself not only caught, but with the sources of her self-expression and the means for getting affection from people gradually and progressively restricted. Hence the slow dulling of the light under which she lived, the despair, and the longing for death. Long months of intricate treatment had to be worked through before she was well again.

For there are no magic words, no quick-solving techniques whereby we can make these human frustrations disappear. It is true that when, after months of patient effort, the story is disentangled and the relationships of present feelings to past happenings are unravelled, some of the anxieties and pains and panics and depressions disappear, as do our fears of noises heard in the night when we realize that it is the cat on the kitchen shelf or the toilet that has got stuck again. It is true that the feeling that there is someone who listens patiently and uncensoriously to the long unfolding of our troubles, someone with whom one can try to work out the tangle, often is enough to enable the person to make a readjustment in the way he thinks. It is also true that it is possible to find a way between

existing customs and social institutions for the individual to get some of the satisfaction which he needs in order to live. But it is just as true that we could go on dealing with the individual problems to the end of time and there would always be new individual problems crowding forward. We cannot hope to make serious inroads into the great amount of personal, social, and mental ill health until we begin to deal with harmful concepts and with dangerous social institutions.

We have got to recognize and do something about the fact that where one parent dies young, the children are left in a potentially dangerous situation, for their emotional and social relationships are going to be spun from one pole in place of the customary two. Insecurity, fixation, damage to the emerging sex pattern, are dangers as real as the slippery footpath, the beach with the hidden undertow, the hotel without the fire-escape—they brought Betty just as close to death.

The story of the final frustration of her life with her second husband, due to his inhibited, formalized existence and pollarded affections, leads us directly back to the need for the schools to undertake careful and thorough instruction in human behavior, in the way people develop and live, meet difficulties, the solutions which are normal and healthy, those which are hazardous, which lead to frustrations and grievances to both social and mental health. This kind of instruction is absolutely essential to the life of the new world into which we are passing, and no other institutions save the schools, which are kept constantly in touch with the progress in knowledge being gained through the social sciences, can undertake it. At present, what instruction is acquired is picked up at random from people who have little save the brief record of their own difficulties to offer and from social institutions which have no contact with the expanding social sciences and have nothing to pass on save precepts from a remote and totally inappropriate past.

This woman's story, which can be endlessly repeated with endless variations on the central theme, leads back also to the



fact, simple to state but hard to face, that not all people are fit to bring up children. Very clearly, there was something wrong in her second husband's childhood home. „Children are not naturally inhibited, frustrated, emotionally truncated.

Before the eyes of all those who work with people, before the eyes of teachers, lawyers, psychiatrists and social workers, psychologists and sociologists, counsellors and personnel workers, as they sit in their offices, in their armchairs at home, as they lie in vacation reverie, as they think and talk about their work, rise pictures of countless people struggling with their times—the girl whose confidence has been damaged by an insecure mother; a young man who cannot take responsibility because of a sadistic father; a chronic complainer working out in devious ways his profound frustration; the unhappy people haunted by our threatening, destructive sexual myths; people dislocated from supporting social groups by our socially planless, headlong, industrial development; people whose lives are choked by ancient rubbish carried down by the generations: “insanity in the family”; “you can't change human nature”; “there's bad blood in that Watson family”; folklore of predestination and the inevitable wickedness of people; the “will-power” myths.

As this panorama of human beings passes by, face and problem fading endlessly into yet another unhappy, limited being and still another antiquated, time-crippled custom, belief, and institution, the conviction takes form and weight that new ways of living are our immediate needs, ways drawn from human nature itself as it actually is, as it could become; not ways of living based on assertions which had validity in the far-off times and places where they first took origin and which have been carried on into our times to limit, to bind, and to destroy happiness, effectiveness and, often enough, life itself.

## CHAPTER XIII

### *RADICAL AND REACTIONARY*

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN RADICAL AND REACTIONARY IS AS ETERNAL as the winter world bound in the iron of ice, as eternal as the bursting violence of the spring thaw. This struggle pervades the whole of man's life and all of his history that we have yet dug up from even the most ancient of kitchen middens and other prehistoric scrap books. The struggle is fought out as bitterly in the lawyer's home, at the corner of Elm and Main, in the Saskatchewan prairie town, or on a national scale in India. It reaches its highest intensity in times such as these when the old established way of living is breaking up with unusual rapidity.

Great forward movements in designs of living have always tended to be followed by reaction. That tremendous early attempt to establish a world order, the Roman Empire, gave way in its collapse to a period of superstition and narrowness of outlook which still terrifies us as a possible consequence if we fail in the next few decades.

The long straight roads running plain and determined across hill and valley, the gracious Roman villa, the broad statesmanship of Augustus, gave way in a long retreat. No more straight roads were built, men followed the muddy, tortuous cattle tracks through the forests, the aqueducts were broken, the little towns grew squalid and pestilence-struck behind their medieval walls.

Men everywhere fell back from the stirring business of building up their world and sought refuge from thought, from growth, and change, from personal responsibility in monasticism and militarism.

The great forward surge of the French Revolution was followed by a period of profound reaction which spread throughout all Europe and which resulted in the destruction, for a time, of many of the human liberties that had been won in France.

This staggering, swaying progression of civilization is enormously wasteful of human effort and human values. True enough, the great revolutions bring with them a tremendous feeling of release and ferment; there are plenty of people who can say, despite the blood and wreckage, that it is magnificent to be alive at such a time. But when what is lost during the inevitable period of reaction is subtracted, the real gain is much less than that made during periods of steady expansion and growth.

Those with an eye for putting two and two together have long since seen that these Great Swings in human affairs are only too common. They make their unwanted appearance, not only in politics, but in our economic affairs. Always a plague, they have grown to gigantic proportions in the last century. Periods of prosperity have burst upon us suddenly, have spiralled up to giddy peaks, and then broken down into ruins. Modest aspirations for "a chicken in every pot" mounted through "two cars in every garage," to five years' work in a lifetime, paper fortunes in two weeks, and then fell, to the accompaniment of stock brokers and their clients jumping from twenty-story buildings, to the trading of a tooth filling for a dozen eggs, two cigarettes for the morning paper in Paris.

In the last decade and a half we have set to work on these financial swings. The painfully and bitterly promoted, bitterly resisted development of new economic concepts—the price and wage ceilings, the maintenance of purchasing power through high wages, the buffers and brakes put on the stock market, the

fixed savings, the high income tax—have steadied us during periods of special instability.

These Great Swings have appeared in our food supplies. Fortunately for us on this “luxury” continent, they have appeared on our side of the water only as comparatively minor events and only during the early days of colonization. Even at that, black winters and dwindling supplies of grain, unsuccessful hunting of scarce game, were tough enough, and here and there groups and off-shoots of the colonies reaching in from the seaboard died off; but they never broke, even transitorily, the pattern of expansion.

It has been far different in China and India and Russia, the principal famine areas of the world. Here was, and still is in the first two, an extremely dangerous situation: vast numbers of people living together, inadequately supplied with transportation. Where there is a local failure of crops and at the same time the transportation system becomes overloaded or impaired, then Death runs his count up into the millions. Once the food from your own fields and gardens fails, if the transportation arteries are too narrow to bring in supplies, too choked to take you out, then your neighbors are going to eat you to death. Areas of rot soon appear in these great continental smears of humanity and spread till the numbers of the living balance once more the food supplies. These Swings, too, we have started to slow down. They are much fewer and less destructive than they were. But they still occur. The last took plenty of lives in Bengal in 1943 and 1944.

Here, then, are three kinds of Great Swings appearing in our modern society—swings in food supply, in our economic affairs, and in our social institutions. In all three, periods of excess have been followed by periods of disastrous recession. The final results in all three have been vast losses in human happiness and energy and great delays in progress.

To a considerable extent we have succeeded in eliminating these Great Swings from the field of food supply and have made

a start on the job of preventing booms and depressions in our financial affairs. Can we do the same thing with our social set-up? Can we take steps which will prevent the appearance of destructive revolutionary changes and also prevent the recurrent surges of reaction? This certainly is much more difficult than dealing with the first two kinds of Great Swings because we have to manipulate beliefs and traditions which are of the utmost emotional significance to the individual. We have to deal with beliefs concerning family, class, and racial status; concerning economic concepts; concerning the way we function, beliefs which have been the very trellis up which our personalities have grown and around which they have taken form. These beliefs are buttressed by social institutions which are of vast antiquity and which began to exercise their influence upon us almost from the moment the doctor walked out of the delivery room door. Hence the beliefs and concepts and traditions which they support seem all but inevitable and are defended with a maximum of ecstatic vigor.

What are the basic causes of radicalism? By radicalism we mean the sweeping away of all obstacles, useful or otherwise, the insistence that the old must be extirpated in a ruthless drive for the sought-for goal.

There is the boy who rebels against his father's harsh repression and therefore breaks away from home as soon as he is able to fend for himself. There is the youngster who rebels against his father and has to go on rebelling all his life, who becomes the pacifist in answer to his father's militarism, the communist to his father's capitalism, and sometimes the homosexual to his father's heterosexuality. Most tragic of all is the son who cannot more than halfway free himself, who is half himself and half his tyrannical father, who asserts his rebellion only to find punishing, crippling guilt feelings attacking him from the depths of his own personality.

What is true of the home is also true of the national group or of the still wider areas covered by a culture which passes

beyond national groups. Group reactions do differ in many important respects from those of individuals, yet something of the same general pattern can be seen. The maintenance of the status quo long after pressure for change has begun to mount to dangerous levels has always led to explosions which are vaster the greater the repression. Witness the huge destruction of life, property, and social institutions in Russia when a conspicuously reactionary government and church were finally overthrown by pressures which had been resisted until they became explosive. At this time much the same situation appears to be developing in the Far East.

What are these powerful forces working for change? It is easy for us to personalize issues. For most people, the recent trouble in Europe was Hitler and his gang of Nazis. It is simpler to think of it that way, rather than as having grown out of the very nature of German culture, out of its hierarchical structure, out of the progressive narrowing of the in-group in German society—these are pretty dry stones to suck on. But, unfortunately, if you personify a problem, you are apt to find yourself dealing with persons rather than with the problem. You can go around and lop off the heads of as many Nazi leaders as still carry them on their shoulders and no one will give you so much as a vexed look. But just as certainly it won't do much good, for it is the soil that matters. If you lop off the heads of the weeds without clearing out the soil, there will be a fresh crop as soon as winking.

So it is here. It is true that where there is a great struggle between progress and reaction there are plenty of people whose fortunes are tied up with progress and plenty tied to reaction. The Bourbons and the Robespierres are perennial familiars of human nature. But, with the panorama of the last century and a half spread out behind us, we can now see that a vast amount of pressure for change is indirect.

Much of the impetus to change a particular aspect of social

organization does not come from direct sources at all; its real causes may be quite remote. The change need not be planned for, and at first—or, indeed, in some instances throughout the whole period of the change—it may not actually be desired even by a small minority.

The influence of these large, indirect forces can perhaps be most easily seen in some of the consequences of industrialization. Prior to this development of our culture, the large family was an asset. It meant more hand and foot power on the farm, in the woods, or at the fishing grounds. For all the family it meant that the margin between production and consumption was expanded so that its members were not so exposed to the danger of drought or poor fishing season or disabling illness. If you were laid up with a bout of fen fever, you wouldn't be distracted by the bellowing of un milked cows—your eighth daughter, Hazel, could go out and milk them.

With industrialization came the centralization of work in densely populated areas where living space was at a premium, and that premium soon changed from a figure of speech to a figure in dollars to be paid for as "key money," payment for nominal furniture, or downright bribes to itchy-fingered house agents. Recruitment of workers from the rural areas went on for decades, resulting in large numbers of people being separated from their original families. There was no longer any sharing of labor between the members of the family; at best, there was a sharing of the pay check.

In consequence of this, the advantages of having a large family disappeared and the liabilities became a slow-up sign which even the most impetuously prolific began to heed. It was harder to find living quarters, there was a drain on the income during the period when the children had to be educated, there was very little certainty that the parents would see any financial return for it. With the almost explosive development of the employment of women which has taken place in the last

few decades, there has been an increasing tendency for women to continue working after marriage and to return to work after having one or two children.

All these factors have operated in favor of smaller families. It may certainly be said, however, that the mid-nineteenth century saw no conscious planning for a smaller family; it simply became customary under the pressure of these indirect forces which at first sight seemed to have nothing at all to do with the matter.

This process of the accumulation of pressure for change, derived from sources which at first might appear quite unconnected, is going on continuously. For convenience, we tend to see the various components of our social structure as separate organizations—the law, transportation, the church, education, the family, industry. In actuality they are very closely tied to each other, so that changes in any one of them are reflected in the others.

Unless change can be prevented from occurring anywhere and at any time within the social structure, that structure is bound to change. Change can be, and is, held up at various points by deeply entrenched interests, both individual and institutional, but ultimately the pressure for change drawn from the innumerable modifications going on in other parts of the structure reaches such a point that it occurs with revolutionary force.

The infinitely slow progress during the days of barbarism had been rendered certain of continuance, and had begun to increase, with the invention of the recording of information by crude pictures and later by primitive symbols. The invention of printing in the fifteenth century was another event the immense consequences of which could not be foreseen at that time. It meant, however, as time has shown, that the processes of change were to proceed with far greater rapidity from that day. For it resulted in an immense speeding up of the dissemination of new ideas. It meant ultimately that changes which occurred in any part of the social structure, that new ways of looking at things



which were evolved by any group could be communicated in an exceedingly short period of time, and that any section of the community not temporarily walled off by traditions, taboos, or sanctities was thus kept in continual modifying contact with the rest of the social structure of which it was a part.

Some conception of the power of this invention began to take form by the sixteenth century, and those institutions—both state and clerical—which were concerned with the preservation of things as they were began, fortunately too late, to oppose the free use of the printing press.

The Renaissance resulted in a great increase in freedom of judgment for large numbers of individuals. Under the impact of this free judgment the queer nightmare of the Middle Ages faded into a nineteenth-century world which was any man's oyster to open if he had the wherewithal. Initiative and enterprise flourished; the walls of time, space, and plenty fell back on every hand.

Steam has shoved wheels around and turning wheels have shoved peoples together. Propellers have cut into the air and into social structure. Electric circuits have lit lamps and lighted up minds all around the earth.

Entrenched and authoritarian institutions have continued since then to wage a losing fight against the free dissemination of ideas. They have succeeded in a measure, however, insofar as those ideas concern human nature, human relations, incentives, and motives. And it is in this very field in which progress has lagged that the gravest dangers are arising.

One of the most frequently used weapons in this fight has been indoctrination. The most notorious use of it has been made in our day by the Nazis, who have posed our post-war world with one of its major problems in the existence of large numbers of deeply indoctrinated men and women who, unless they can be freed from their beliefs, will be completely unassimilable into modern civilization. If we can succeed in inventing means of changing their attitudes and beliefs, we shall find ourselves in

possession of measures which, if wisely used, may be employed in freeing ourselves from attitudes and beliefs in other fields which have greatly contributed to the instability of our period by their propensity for holding up progress.

But social change, great though it has been, has almost entirely taken place in consequence of something else. It has not been change planned for, worked out ahead of time, controlled in its introduction. Much of our social legislation is the offspring of a shotgun marriage. Many of our social adaptations have been patchwork jobs. Nearly all have been secondary to changes forced upon us by our advances in the material field. And nearly always the change has been too little and too late—much too late.

Witness the thirty-three year old woman in whom the insecurities, the conflicting values of the times find their expression in profound anxiety. In her childhood there was an unusually early maturation of her sexual life. She began to masturbate at the age of six and to go through puberty at the age of eleven. Our deeply confused beliefs concerning sexual living exposed her to severe guilt-provoking reprimands from her mother. She suffered further trauma when her mother had to go out and work to support the family: the beliefs of the group in which the child grew up were that the man should work and the woman should tend the home. Her partial rejection by her mother led to a frantic search for security, even at the price of development of symptoms which, while they handicapped her, at least demanded and got attention. After her marriage, she forced her husband into the position of continually supplying reassurance. When she at last sought psychiatric assistance, her earliest demands were for direction: "I will do anything you say if it will only get me well. I want you to give me a regime to follow. Tell me what I should do each hour during the day; tell me how I should control my thoughts. I want you to tell me what I am." Surrender to authority as an escape from insecurity could hardly go further. Fortunately for her future, and for all our futures, this surrender is no

escape and we are forced back to the job of mastering our private worlds if we mean to free ourselves from anxieties.

Much radicalism finds its origin, or at least, its first manifestations, during adolescence. That this is a period of unrest and protest has long been recognized. In the spring of his life, the young man's thoughts do not merely lightly turn to love but also to kicking the old man in the pants, if only ideologically.

On this continent, rows of this kind, while sharp enough, are usually individual affairs. With us, youth gets more of a hearing. Where authoritarianism has a grip, it is different. There you see revolutionary movements in which adolescents take a big share in the rowing, rioting, and dying. Contrast the frequency with which the North American student gets into conflict with the police over political issues with the same situation in pre-war Europe and South America. Look at the way in which the new state religions have built up youth movements and use their unrest as dynamite to blow up reactionary social institutions, and contrast this with the mild activities of the Boy Scouts in the Anglo-American countries.

Adolescent unrest and protest is, of course, nothing new. It is the last call for those who want to complete their psychological weaning from their parents. There is reason to think, however, that these conflicts are sharper than they used to be. The differences in attitude between parents and adolescents are relatively greater nowadays than they were in previous periods. At the time when the Western Hemisphere was first settled, social change was moving at the rate of the horse and buggy, actually as well as figuratively. The beliefs and attitudes which a boy learned from his father would serve him as he grew up to manhood and, with little change, were still valid in his last years. Hence his father and he, apart from individual differences, tended to see things the same way. They had, by and large, the same attitude towards such matters as the part that women should play in the scheme of things, towards religion, towards

the relation of children to their parents, towards work, and towards war.

At this point in our development, however, social change runs fast. The beliefs and attitudes that the man learned in his father's home are no longer valid even in his manhood years, let alone in his later years. Many men succeed in adjusting their earlier beliefs and attitudes. Others do not. There are many whose fixation on their own parents is so great that they cannot give up beliefs and attitudes which they learned in their childhood days. Witness the now fading cry, "What was good enough for my father is good enough for me." Others are too insecure to venture to change their beliefs. Others again are excessively egocentric and hostile towards anything which seems like an attempt to interfere with them through their beliefs. Still others have been caught into an emotional adherence to some reactionary institution and are quite unwilling and, indeed, unable to face the task of reversing their beliefs. For such persons, conflict with their own children, who learn the beliefs and attitudes of the day in school, is inevitable. The conflict is rendered the more intense and the more serious since the extent to which these beliefs and attitudes have changed is quite considerable.

From resentment and fears concerning this clash come despairing attempts by older groups to control their times. For example, the teacher oath-legislature which has been introduced into several states. This feeling is also represented by the general attitude of suspicion with which teachers' associations are regarded and the periodic investigations of the activities of individual teachers and of organizations of teachers.

Despite all this, both progress and friction continue. The greater the resistance, the greater, usually, the radicalism of the adolescent. It reaches particularly extreme forms where the divergence between the everyday attitudes a boy learns in the school and in the streets and those held by his parents is profound. You can see this reactionary explosion in the children of immigrants. Where the parent attempts to maintain the attitudes

and beliefs of his European home, and the child learns the very different ways of the North American culture, friction grows with the years. Rebellion against their parents' ways often spreads to rebellion against the teachings and ways of their society, against "the boss," and the established order of things.

The Italian mother who won't let her American-born daughter have anything to do with boys at an age when half the class is having dates and going out to dances and movies, is in for trouble, just as surely as the Old World father who insists in maintaining a patriarchal authority over his sons which includes their trading in their pay checks for an allowance fixed by him.

The first thing which requires spotlighting is the fact that our personal plans are becoming more and more based upon the certainty of change. Our personal plans multiplied spell our culture, the way of living of our times. It should not be too difficult to see this inevitability of change. Plenty of people have pointed their fingers at it. Their sayings run all the way from the "What have we got to lose?" blues of Noel Coward's *Cavalcade*, to you and nearly everyone else who has said during the last decade, "I never try to plan more than six months ahead any longer." This didn't use to be the case, and those who were planning their careers, their educations, their marriages, even twenty years ago used to blueprint for a future which looked pretty solid far out ahead. Actually it wasn't, for they were looking at things in a light that was still shining in from away back in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. But permanence in the old sense had begun to crack up with the Renaissance and was gone before the World Wars set in. Its speed of disappearance was very rapid during the early industrial period, far too rapid for some people. Members of the *ancien régime*, pressed too hard, went down flying the old flag, "After me, the Deluge." Old boys retired to watch the world from club windows and exchanged the fervent hope that "things would at least last out our time."

It is only slowly, however, that we have given house room to

the fact that Certainty of Change has taken the place of Probability of Permanence. Actually, the latter was simply an invention of our own. It never existed, but at one time, change went on so slowly that within a man's lifetime things might seem fixed. We certainly can't maintain that now and we haven't tried to any extent since the first World War tore down so much of the old façade. But apparently the hangover of the ancient idea that we are guided by a Destiny, the blurry belief that we are living out a long story which has been written down beforehand, has hung like a mist over the hard edges of reality. And until very recently we seem to have felt that we had nothing to do with all these changes, that they were something that was happening to us. Things would stop changing; then there could be a return to the "good old days," "back to normalcy," the monarchy might be restored. During the Second World War there was even a gasp that the horse was coming back, that some of the larger concerns had found that the horse was really better for city deliveries than the truck.

But ideas die with people; the child-parent conflicts are a screen which, though rough and full of holes, does filter out a certain number of outworn beliefs. The Jew, suffering from an anxiety state, who recently came seeking advice had had a rabbi father who had tried to get him to spend two hours a day in prayer and to do no work on Saturday. They fought violently; the young man emerged damaged, but with the conviction that his father's ideas were unreasonable, unworkable, and fruitless. He works on Saturday and expresses his interest in his fellow men by supporting organizations for the assistance of European Jewry.

Our first steps in recognizing the twin facts that change is certain and that we ourselves have a great deal to do with it, have been cautious. They have been concerned with the things we use and not directly with our ways of living; those are too touchy, and anyway it is more satisfactory to think of things as changing

while, with a carryover of infant fantasy, we sit unmoved in our egocentric worlds.

So we have begun to make things with the anticipation of change. Cars, planes, men's suits, and even houses are no longer built to last. The first two, having arrived after the dawn of this new viewpoint, never were built for permanence, though one can see some amazing old electric cars polished, preserved, and driven with a maximum of waste. Men's suits and houses were built for a lifetime or longer. Houses and even clothes were handed down from father to son.

The curtain is going up on the next act. Social inventions are pouring in just as the mechanical ones have done for the last three-quarters of a century. We have already seen the juvenile court, the child guidance clinics, industrial personnel departments, nursery schools, public opinion polls, come into existence. Others are in the process of being brought to birth—the labor pains are bad and they may be fatal in the case of our efforts to bring into the world some means of preventing wars.

What about social inventions for the home? There are no washing machine, electric stove, vacuum cleaner, radio set fortunes for the inventors of social devices for the home. They can't be patented, manufactured, and packaged, but they are as badly wanted as any of those springboards to millionairehood.

We need social inventions to meet the needs of the mother who carries on both a career and a home. She has to be provided with means whereby the psychological development of the children will not be damaged by her absence. Can she be freed from time-consuming domestic tasks by the development of a centrally supplied domestic service, by the setting up of a service to send in cooked meals to be eaten at home? For, in a home with children, their bringing up must take precedence in the minds of even the most confirmed housekeeping addict over the boiling of cauliflower or the waxing of the hall floor. Can some of her functions be taken over by the expansion of the nursery school?

If so, how much? This is a live and expanding problem, for more mothers are going into industry year by year, and they are going to continue doing just that.

Similar inventions are required to deal with the home from which one partner has been removed by death or divorce.

If our first step in breaking up the Great Swings between reaction and radicalism in our ways of living is the recognition of the certainty of change, what comes next? Next comes the necessity of seeing to it that the new facts, working hypotheses, viewpoints, and beliefs about human behavior are put before everyone without check or hindrance or distortion. Along with this goes the necessity of putting a stop to the march down the generations of outworn beliefs, damaging ways of managing human relations, and crippling destructive superstitions.

These twin jobs constitute one exceedingly tough proposition. It is fairly easy nowadays to be sure that most people will have a chance to make use of new material inventions, some now and others later when they become cheaper. You will wear the newest development in plastic stockings or get one of these new all-plastic umbrellas; you can ride in the most streamlined street-car. When it gets a bit cheaper, everyone will have a chance to try out the jet propulsion plane. But all this is far from true of the social inventions.

There has always been a large number of highly interested parties busily at work trying to head us off from even hearing about or looking at new inventions in human affairs; and of all the devices which they have worked out to prevent us, none has been more effective than putting blinkers on us in childhood and docking our thinking, as we used to dock dogs' tails, so that we cannot see or think about new ways of doing things—they are tabooed, you can't ask about such things, they are not to be talked about.

Astute men have always recognized the importance of the early years—"Give me a boy until he is seven, and I do not care who has him after that," is a saying that comes floating down the



centuries. Since literacy has become all but universal and education compulsory in the Western world, intense competition to control it has set in among radical and reactionary groups within the state and the various religions.

Now there are certain areas in our society so vital, so essential to our welfare that they have had to be put out of bounds as far as competition to control them is concerned. These are the law, medicine, scientific research. Where the law falls into the possession of a dominant group, as it has in the past—as it did in Nazi Germany—then justice is gone. Where scientific research falls under the exclusive control of the state, it shrivels and withers as it did in Japan.

Education is one of the jugular veins. Whoever gets his fingers on it holds your life—not in any figurative sense but, in these days when we must have education for world citizenship or die, he holds it actually. You can't have education the prize possession of one group with its own private interests in this part of the world and of another in South America, of half a dozen others in Europe—all with special ends and purposes to serve which are in no way connected with education.

There is no such thing as Buddhist education, Jewish education, Nazi education. There is education for Buddhism, Judaism, or Naziism if you like, but education for the business of living is just that. It is indivisible, the fundamentals are the same everywhere. True, there must be variation in application to meet the needs of the patchwork of cultures which still exist around our world. There are variations in the teaching and application of sanitation for the same reason, but no one thinks for a moment that the fundamental principles of contagion, of incubation, of inoculation, differ in Bangor and Bangkok.

Now the only way to accomplish the essential is to put the control of education forever out of competition. It must be entrusted finally and exclusively to the hands of those who have no other interest to serve than that of assisting in the growth and unfolding of human personalities, the preparation of mer

and women fit and prepared to take on the responsibility of citizenship in this larger world which is in the making.

There is hope that this can be achieved. Without being unduly cynical, we may say that if that hope depended exclusively upon a successful appeal to reason, it wouldn't have a very bright future. For we are caught in an extremely difficult vicious circle. The fact that the pre-school child and the school child in his early years is powerless to recognize, let alone resist indoctrination, and the fact that once indoctrinated only a minority are able to free themselves in later life, results in the perpetuation and reintroduction, through parental and school teaching, of extraordinarily antiquated, inefficient, and, in our present circumstances, dangerous beliefs concerning human nature.

But the impetus for survival is strong. We had almost forgotten how strong until the last vast psychological pestilence which was World War II swept away tens of millions of lives. Man has always been willing to shift tactics when the old ones were clearly losing him the game. Species upon species of other animals would not, and, indeed, could not, and have disappeared forever from the earth. We have, so far, and can again. But the time is short, shorter than it has ever been before. The great collapse of the civilized Roman world into the Middle Ages took almost a thousand years; the Renaissance took form over several centuries; the Industrial Revolution is a matter of a hundred and fifty years. These great shifts covered periods of generations; there was time for men who could not adjust to die out from natural causes.

The time for us is much less. The shift over to a world society has to be accomplished within the lifetime of men who are already adult, and to describe that task there are no words save the very simple—it will be hard and difficult and probably bloody.

## CHAPTER XIV

### *AGGRESSION AND HOSTILITY*

"MAN IS A FIGHTING ANIMAL." WE SAY THAT WITH QUITE VARYING degrees of admiration, depending upon what he is fighting. If he is indulging his pugnacity in an attempt to pull a reluctant cork out of a grasping bottle, sink a twenty-foot putt on the number eighteen green, push a railroad across the muskeg, or bring his bombed ship into port, we'll agree that he is a praiseworthy fellow; and in the last three instances we'll say so publicly and maybe with medals; in the first, he will have to be content with personal satisfaction and private praise.

But if his pugnacity is getting its workout in putting the shivers up his son's back, or introducing what his secretary calls "butterflies" into her stomach, or in having innumerable rows with the neighbors, with the next parish, or, multiplied a million fold, bloody bouts with other countries, that is something else!

Between these two kinds of expression swings our fate. Without drive and push, without our aggressive determination to master our world, the clearings which we have made upon this quite indifferent earth will close in again. If we maintain that drive and aggression directed like a withering hose against our fellows, we shall all go down in some final Armageddon. The issue is as clearcut as that. It is as old as our first campfire.

In our century, the issue of controlling and directing our aggression has become acute, because, for the first time, im-

mensely increased capacity for destruction has made it possible for a ruthless anti-social group to attack, control, dominate, and destroy everyone, everywhere. This was not possible in primitive times because of the very limited sources of power which were available. The bow and the lever, the club and the spear were simple devices for multiplying the strength of man's own arm, back, belly, and leg muscles.

Even up to the end of the Middle Ages, if the men of the Western world had had the power to exterminate themselves (which as yet they did not have), the catastrophe, though terrible, would not have been total. Very simply, this was because no one yet knew where everyone else was.

But, with the coming of the compass, lime juice to hold off scurvy, and printing to tickle up imaginations, men everywhere found each other. Those with the most power began to exterminate their brothers in Oceania and in the Arctic. The Incas, the Indians, and the Indonesians alike went down before the power which their European brothers had been able to get their fingers on.

All throughout the decades of Victoria's life, Western people everywhere derived a vague, diffuse sense of satisfaction from knowing that our growing control of the sources of power was enabling the individual worker to do twenty, or even one hundred, times as much as he did before. The vague glow has died away under the chilly wind of knowledge that that same control over sources of power has equally increased the individual's ability to destroy.

In the old days—of 1942—five hundred planes, each with a crew of eight men (four thousand people in all) in a night-attack of thirty-five or even twenty minutes could wipe out the greater part of a city of half a million souls. Of course all the half million were not killed; still, the rather antiquated chemical explosions and the fires did pile up a tidy number of corpses.

Our first steps, three years later, into the new atomic era (we are told that they are quite toddling steps, compared with

those which we now can take, and not to be thought of in comparison with those which we will take in ten years' time) showed a great improvement in our capacity for destruction. Now it was just one plane, with a crew of eight, that was able to blow up a great city. One gathers that there was no considerable pile of corpses, for, in the atomic explosions, the bodies also blow up.

But it is not just the advances in our ability to build up power, to control, direct, and release it in such exceptionally destructive ways that makes these the decades of decision. It is the fact that we have made equally extraordinary advances in our capacity to build, organize, and control immense social units. Social organizations of such numerical magnitude as the Soviet Union and the United States did not, and could not, exist during the Medieval period. It is true that, in most places, general scarcity saw to it that numbers were kept down. But, even where numbers were considerable—as in the areas controlled by the Roman Empire, by the transitory imperium of Genghis Khan, and in the vast sprawling area in which successive Chinese dynasties were so frequently engaged in putting down insurrection—the central government was extremely weak. Its power could only be maintained by constant warlike expeditions and continual military occupation of the more rebellious parts.

Now the central government is on your breakfast table with the paper. It breaks into your morning setting-up exercises through the radio. Final control of communication and transportation is going into fewer and fewer hands. Control of communication reached its high point in Nazi Germany where even martyrdom didn't pay as the ultimate protest of the individual. No one knew about it. And if no one knows that you die for this issue or that, then your death is a strictly private affair.

So one can see on what a razor edge we teeter-totter. We must have a central world government; these armed societies that are our sovereign states will blow us into dust if we don't. But to

center all world controls in one place is to hang up the supreme prize of all time for ruthless men to snatch at. Now, if ever, we have to solve this king pin problem of managing human nature so that aggression can be directed against the material world and away from human relations.

What do we know about this? The very fact that such aggressive creatures as men can live together at all means that we have attained some success in directing aggression away from our dealings with each other.

Explorations of the very early campfires, of life in the caves have given us some idea of what men killed and ate, of the kind of tools they had been able to imagine and make. But in the most fruitful of ancient refuse heaps there remains hardly a trace of how those rivals of the sabre-toothed tiger managed their relations with each other. We know practically nothing of the social conventions which had to be observed if you wanted to avoid having your head bashed in. We don't know how the women were shared around, or what rights the children had. All we know is that groups did manage to live together, and that from these groups social organizations crept out over thousands of years to the size of the roaring cities.

Nineteenth century thinkers speculated upon what they called, with a good deal more sunny optimism than we can summon up, "the rise of man." Being children of their times, they tried to figure him out in terms of the things he made and used. After all, why not? They lived in a period when men were "soap boilers," "cotton kings," common laborers, hod-carriers, cab drivers, but rarely people. Man was climbing up to the top of his world by what he made.

So, to them, man was the "tool-making animal." And, for the more tidy-minded who needed a pigeon-hole to file all pigeon-holes, the whole thing—the whole sprawling business of civilization—started with the happy accident that man was made with an apposable thumb, a thumb that was different from the other four fingers, for you could push it up against them and in that

way hold all kinds of things—a spear, a flint, or your rival's throat.

And so, in those halcyon times when there were still hansom cabs and "At Home" days, when we were still in the late afternoon of the years of Victoria, progressive publishers began to print bright little books for the boys and girls of progressive parents. So you could read of Boong, the genius of the cave who, confused by his brother's attempts to tear off his hide, grabbed a branch and, much to everyone's surprise, laid the nuisance out cold. Here the first club was born. We heard of Wow, the bright one who, fed up with his attempts to roll over the trunk of a fallen tree, sat down, again by accident, upon the end of a long branch that ran under the trunk of the tree. The latter heaved up, and there you had the lever—"exactly the same principle, dear little boys and girls, that Dr. Jones, the dentist, uses when he pulls your tooth; so next time, you won't worry about it at all; just think of Wow and his wonderful invention." Then there was Ping, who got the first arrow to fly, and the bright boy who saw that the roller could be pared down to make the wheel.

And then there was the curious discovery of the sail. It has pleased the psychoanalysts that the nineteenth century innocents usually dreamed up this discovery as having been made by a young couple escaping from the wrath of the tribe. Almost caught, they arrived hot and breathless upon the brink of a wide river. There was a long black log floating beside the bank. They jumped onto it with no other idea in their heads, or in that of the pre-Freudian historian, than that it was that much further away from the group of enraged fathers, brothers, cousins, and general hangers-around who, by this time, were on the bank. The log drifted out towards the sun which, oddly enough, was rising at that moment. A little breeze came up and the woman made the astounding discovery that it began to push them back to shore. The scene closes with the woman discreetly spreading her one-piece furry garment—the better to catch the breeze—the log moving majestically forward, and the man and the woman,

especially the latter, being received back by the awestruck and now adoring bunch on the bank as celestial beings. After all, it had been quite an experience, as most will agree.

And so they said it went. With his lever and his wheel, the things that you could throw at people, the wonderful bow and the bright sail, man jogged along until it was time for Mrs. Watts' little boy to sit and watch the steam raising the lid of his mother's teakettle. From here on, according to the more anxious-minded and irritable twentieth century analysts, "all hell broke loose."

Well, it may have been that way and certainly was so in part. It may be just our natural preoccupation with Belsen and Dachau, it may be our face to face acquaintance with the ingenious horrors of which we are capable, our vivid and personal knowledge of the intolerance, the ferocious resistance to innovation, the conspiracy of entrenched social institutions against progress that makes us feel sure that Boong and Ping and Wow and the interestingly attractive figures on the log must all have been killed off a thousand times by their fellows outraged and terrified by their flagrant tampering with the natural order of things, with the way things were, had always been, and were clearly meant to be. The psycho-sociology of progress, change, and reform had not yet been written. Martyrdom was still a bridge across which the rest would sometime cross over.

Now standing in this mid-century light (it is anybody's guess whether it is twilight or dawn) Man the Tool-maker with his magic thumb looks quite different. We have a thorough-going conviction that that thumb of his got us into our present mess, or, if it is not just the thumb, it is the fact that we have been so fascinated by the things it can turn out that we have ignored the existence of the fellow attached to the other end of it.

Now we are trying to catch up with the facts on him. Man the Tool-maker becomes Man the Society-maker. We still have to think in terms of happy accidents. It is part of our rebellion against the "Man's Destiny was written from the Beginning" mythology. The Tool-maker's happy accident was his apposable



thumb. The Society-maker's start in life was the long period during which his children remained helpless and the fact that, unlike other animals which were only periodically sexually receptive, women could, and did, get pregnant at any time: the new member didn't necessarily arrive in spring or summer when it would have been reasonably convenient, but at all kinds of times—when the tribe was moving, when game was scarce, when it was deadly cold. Women and children were handicaps all right, but they were also assets: the tribes needed them. You couldn't knock them around too much or desert them when they couldn't keep up. Some code of rules and customs had to be agreed upon.

This was the beginning of things just as certainly as the invention of the first club. For, though this attempt at setting up a design for living most probably consisted in the extremely primitive matter of the biggest and most aggressive male beating all others into submission or driving competitors away out of the group, a number of exceptionally dynamic things got their chance to make their first bow on the world stage.

In this society of the Old Man (curiously reminiscent of the Fuehrer-Prinzip which the Nazis used to hail as "Our Adolf's" most brilliant innovation) a chance was born to improve ways of communicating. Grunts and hisses, gutturals and labials—to say nothing of gestures—gradually acquired significance, slowly gained differentiation, and the road was open for another dynamism which has still got plenty to be unpacked.

For, once our ways of communicating became better established, this remarkable capacity which man has to multiply his ability, to deal with things by linking brains, got going. And when the first smudgy drawings appeared on the cave wall, we had started to link not only living brains but dead ones as well. From this has come, down through the centuries, the enormous expansion of knowledge: recipes dealing with our world, an extraordinary variety of designs whereby people can come together in increasingly large numbers without killing each

other. These are the things that allowed Man the Tool-maker to do his stuff with that thumb of his.

This account, of course, is very much what the statisticians call a "smoothed" curve—one of the persistently reminiscent terms which stick in your memory, while you have to go and consult a manual to revive such arid ones as "regression coefficient." All the dips into misery, all the designs which led to futility and extermination, have been levelled out in this description. And there were many of these reversals. At times, the dead brains on the cave walls ran the show. This was especially true when later they migrated into parchment rolls and into books which were kept secret for the use of the few. There have been century-long periods when the dead brains—traditions, conventions, the massive grasping vise of the mores—held all living men in slavery to their ancient wills.

Every new social invention has been a battleground for power. The group has fought against the aggression of the individual, the individual has fought against the efforts of the group to take him over.

The better we have succeeded in working out societies which direct aggression away from human relations and against our material world, the more rapidly we have gone ahead. Let us risk a hypothesis about that dreadful, but scientifically fascinating, period, the Middle Ages, and suggest that, after the collapse of the Roman Empire, men, seeing all around them the ruins left by their own aggression, attempted to check aggression everywhere, not simply when it appeared in human relations, but even when it was directed against their material world. Whether that was the purpose or not, certainly that was the situation. For, during that thousand-year period, all attempts to change the existing order, or the existing concepts of the world met the most ruthless attempts to suppress them.

It was only with the return of aggressive attacks upon the world after the Renaissance, that man began to move forward again. With amazing good fortune there appeared very shortly

thereafter the first beginnings of an invention which has been most successful in dealing with interpersonal aggression. This was the democratic way of living together, of granting power, and at the same time controlling it. There is certainly no coincidence in the fact it is in those centuries in which democracy has been well established that most progress has been made, that men have been able to free themselves the most completely from old superstitions and entrenched social institutions—from the dead brains on the cave wall.

The very nature of this discussion of aggression shows what a gap there has been between medieval thinking and the trends of modern social science. In the old moralistic jargon, aggressiveness was "bad"; there were all kinds of piously quoted sayings about the virtues of humility and meekness. The murders and rapine, the pillages and tortures of the long Medieval night are testimony to the utter uselessness of these moralistic methods of controlling human behavior. Modern thinking recognizes that aggressiveness is one of man's fundamental drives; that when it is directed towards controlling and adapting our world, it is a powerful and valuable constructive force; when it is directed against our relations with each other it can, and does, kill us off in growing numbers. But scientific thinking goes further. It asserts that exhortation is of limited value. If you are going to change something, you have got to study it and work out plans.

Some of the objectives of the ancient systems of thought and those of modern scientific enquiry are the same. The adjuration, "Love one another," is much older than any existing religion. It goes back to the very first societies and is the clear recognition that aggression has to be kept out of our dealings with each other if we are to live, let alone grow.

Aggressiveness and hostility are rather like Little Red Riding Hood and the Wolf. Wherever that little lady was, you were pretty sure to find the Wolf. Indeed, she and he had a good deal more to do with each other than you might gather if you just listened to the tone of indignant protest and final moral triumph

in which the story is written. The objective mind, freed from the necessity of moralizing about the matter, will recall that Little Red Riding Hood met the Wolf in a singularly dark and private forest, and that, as the story fell into the ancient accentuated tempo of such affairs, she finally encountered him in bed. Red Riding Hood appears to have been a girl who attracted wolves.

So with aggression and hostility; their relationship is just as natural and just as deeply bedded. Aggression is the urge to dominate and control one's world, whether it is in the matter of keeping up the temperature in the radiators, the weeds out of the pansy beds, the ants out of the sugar, or keeping Master P. P. Brighteyes dry and Mrs. O. Helen Borus out of the Ladies Aid. Hostility is the irritation, annoyance, anger, and downright hate which we feel when our urge to dominate is frustrated.

Interestingly, both aggression and hostility may be turned in on ourselves. Witness the will-power myths, the man who has himself "well in hand," the enthusiast who makes himself toe the line for its own sake, the fellow who gives up something to show himself that he can do it, the hardy cold bath devotee. Hostility towards oneself is much commoner than we say. Some of it is a little topsy-turvy; its real meaning is below the surface. Witness the anxious-minded, dependent, striking looking woman in her early thirties who runs a pretty fair home, but has a burst of self-criticism nearly every evening. She tells her husband that she is really no good, that she can't run the house in the way that he deserves, that she tries to bring the children up right but is doing a perfectly rotten job. These self-accusations are so obviously wide of the mark that her husband, in simple defense of things as they are, is forced to tell her that she is actually doing a bang-up job, that she is a splendid wife and that her children are lucky to have her. That, of course, is precisely what this anxious-minded woman wants to hear.

On the other hand, there are plenty of people who have a real and driving hostility towards themselves. There was the young man, strictly raised on an Old Testament version of life, who,

in an off-moment, was unfaithful to his pregnant wife—with her best friend. The very next morning he became extremely self-critical, felt that he had sinned, that he must make atonement. At first he attempted to atone with his life; later he satisfied himself with a partially successful effort to blind himself: he had punished the offending members, his eyes, which had looked where they should not have looked.

There is no need to take a pointer to show that there is an extraordinary amount of hostility in our modern world. All checks indicate that it is increasing. Most people who lived in areas in which, during World War II, there was a considerable increase of stress without, at the same time, an increase in imminent danger—for example, in the North American cities—were aware of an increase in friction and hostility between people. Where there was an increase of danger and death, the tendency to pull together and the rise in group solidarity offset this friction. But where danger was lacking, you could see the rising hostility in the attitudes of public service workers, in streetcar conductors, taxi drivers, sales personnel. You could hear it on the telephones and in Congressional debates.

Fortunately, during the War much of it could be drained off and directed against the enemy, but that outlet is gone and you can see hostility spilling over into industrial relations, into the age-old postwar quarrels between allies.

This business of directing hostility derived from one source against some other object altogether is something we have to watch out for; otherwise, we may find ourselves slapping the bite instead of the dog. Taking it out on someone else is what happens when those really responsible for our hostility are too big for us to challenge, are tabooed people, or people for whom we have strong feelings of affection, whose love means too much for us to risk losing by attacking them.

Hitler, that dreary failure at every trade he tried, save politics, owed part of his amazing success in the latter field to his ability to feel, understand, and manipulate these psychological mecha-

nisms, especially as they affected great masses of people. The record of the rise of the Nazis is so worm-riddled with their lies, with their efforts at concealment, so distorted by the hatred and fears of the rest of us, that it is almost impossible to follow out cause and effect, to figure out what was planned and what was simply the result of some chance abnormality in those who rose to such immense and bloody power in Europe.

But we certainly can say that Hitler acted as though he understood very clearly the intricate business of directing hostility. Looking at it as dispassionately as possible, one is bound to think that once the German people had given him power, he realized that the savage pressures he intended to put them under in order to mould them to his purpose would result in an enormous rise in frustration. He must have realized that there would be frustration confronting almost every single person—worker and foreman, housewife and school-teacher, preacher and priest, doctor, lawyer, and soldier—in his morning newspaper (soon to be turned into a propaganda lie sheet); in his job, which was to be bent to war; in his earnings, which were to be spent in a gathering blare of propaganda for aggression.

Hitler found his solution in the Jews. Against them the endless, bitter hostility created by the ferocious repressions and realignments of German life were drained off and consumed in the most dreadful persecutions since the days of the old religious exterminations. If it had not been drained off, if it had remained directed against its real cause—the Nazi state power—then the latter could not have grown, and might well have been destroyed in its early stages.

How well Hitler planned, how well he understood mass psychology, stands out in the continued use of this mechanism and of this same objective—the Jews—even in those countries which had almost died under the Nazis, but which, being liberated, found themselves still frustrated by the measureless confusion of our society.

Now every housewife who is not as hardened as an old shoe,

every puny boy, anyone who is a little different, knows perfectly well that this scapegoat mechanism was not invented by the Nazis and will not come to an end when the last rope tightens around the last Nazi neck. For, from time immemorial, men infuriated by stubborn rocks, balky horses, and opinionated bosses, have come home to seek relief in pushing the little woman around, either verbally or actually. Anyone who is a little different because of a limp, a liking for poetry, a touch of genius, or membership in a minority group, has known that he was a likely funnel into which would be poured the hostility generated by the daily frustrations of his surrounding group.

The problem is age-old, like bubonic plague and famine. In the seventeenth century, plague took the lives of tens of thousands of Londoners; it took half the population of Halle; it broke out repeatedly all over England; the then small cities of Vienna and Dresden lost about eighty thousand apiece. Nothing could be done about it that was any good; one might burn rags and incense, drink sack or pray, but the plague went on until it was finished. Now scientific enquiry has a toe-hold on the problem and the plague has been driven back into the East, where we still have not fully won our battle against the fleas and lice and rats. But plague's last days on earth can be counted.

Against hostility we have worked out almost no protective measures. If the seventeenth century belongs to bubonic plague, the twentieth century belongs to the psychological pestilence of hostility. Where the bacillus pestis took its piddling tens and hundreds of thousands, uncontrollable hostility has swept away millions and tens of millions. And we are only part way through an enormous amount of social reorganization which has to be undertaken in an exceedingly short period of time. This means that there certainly is going to be a further rise in the amount of frustration. For many long established ways of doing things, many plans and lives fashioned by the expectation of permanence, will be smashed in that massive reordering of our world.

What have we with which to attack this pestilence of hostility?

To the historian of the twenty-third century—if he actually ever does come into existence, and if he is not simply a speculative nomad looking at the great, tree-covered mounds that were our cities—our period will seem to him to have been one when humanity hung breathless on the fate of these few mid-century decades.

For, while our knowledge concerning aggression and hostility is rising slowly, the level of hostility between individuals, between groups, and between the armed sovereign states, is rising much more rapidly. Our information is coming piecemeal from the various points in our society where the social sciences have taken hold and begun to grow. It is coming from studies upon individual men and women who have developed so much hostility that they find it increasingly difficult to manage their social relations, or who have suffered so much through the hostility of those on whom they had to depend that they have developed personality damage. It is coming from the experimental work of the psychologists, from the investigations of the anthropologists into cultures in which all social relations are charged with a high degree of hostility, and into those in which the level of hostility is quite low. It is coming from the rather rule-of-thumb efforts of personnel departments and labor relations experts to manage those exceptionally dangerous breeding-places of modern hostility, our industrial organizations.

At the most important level of all, that of the armed sovereign states, neither the "practical" politician nor the political scientist appear to have achieved the basic premises which would allow them to make a sound beginning. They have not yet recognized that hostility and aggressive trends come from people, not from economic systems or from leaders or armament manufacturers or big business. True enough, the way in which the people organize their relations, the kind of social institutions which they operate, have a very definite bearing upon the amount of hostility and the way in which it is directed. But the thing to study is, first the snail, and then his shell.



From the growing thousands and tens of thousands of those suffering from this worldwide psychological pestilence of hostility who come and sit across the desk from the psychiatrist or lie on consulting couches (by no means as decorative as Hollywood suggests) in long attempts to ravel out their precarious climb up to adult life, we can begin to pick out certain dangerous areas on the map of the unfolding of individual personalities.

The first of these is frustration. Now some frustration is essential to the growth of every child. The idea of four or five decades ago that you must never frustrate your child, that the little budding income tax provider should be allowed to beat the cat, stick pins in his sister, and tell his old man off, is gone. What does the damage is the extreme frustration, the excessive exposure to insecurity. In these days when the old fortress family is all but gone, when many of the emotional and interest bonds no longer run from the child exclusively to his parents but go out also to the nursery school teacher and to his play group, and when public opinion has solidified against much of the physical mishandling of children by parents, you might not think that some of the things that do happen to children could still take place. While some of it is deliberate enough, much of it takes place unknowingly. Public and parent alike have not yet recognized the damage done by chronic insecurity, by deeply bedded hostility in a mother who may not herself be fully aware of its existence.

It is not difficult, however, to see how much damage was done by the father who took his six-year-old boy out for a walk, stopped and told him how to make a bed by pulling handfuls of grass and piling them up, and then told him that he had to leave home that afternoon because he had been so bad that neither his mother nor his father loved him any more. No one can be surprised if hostility is dominant in the dealings of this boy now grown to manhood.

Nor is it hard to see that the mother who rejected her child, installed nurses and governesses who, in turn, were fired as soon

as it was clear that the child had begun to grow fond of them, has a daughter who is intensely hostile to her and who, to her own distress, finds that she has an urge to hurt people, to make them feel as inadequate and unloved as she herself felt when a little girl.

Now these two people may seem to stand out as exceptional individuals. But they are exceptional only in the sense that this kind of parent behavior is something to which public opinion has become sensitized; it is not quite as common as it was. These two people are by no means exceptional when seen against the background of excessive frustration and excessive insecurity which is the pre-school experience of a great many children. And, as our social structure continues its extraordinary transformation, the number of families which are permeated by insecurity is rising. There is no need to restate the story of the anxiety families, of the necessity of keeping chronically insecure, hostile, and deeply frustrated people out of the lives of children during their early formative years.

Quite apart from the aggression and hostility derived from these individual experiences, some of our social conventions deliberately foster aggression between persons. For our competitive system is just that—the anxiety to make the team, to get into the sorority, the competition for academic placing.

Our poisonous nationalistic histories, the planned fomenting of friction between classes and between sections within the national group, are reflections of our deliberate attempt to make use of the incentive value of our own aggressive drives. Conventions have been set up which allow some of this to be done without too much damage. Bill may fight his head off to avoid losing the singles championship, to Joe, but usually after it is over, no very lasting animosity lingers—but that handshake over the net, the “better luck next time,” “if your volleying hadn’t gone back on you in the second set, I’d never have made it,” are not there just by chance. They are our recognition of the fact that we are playing with fire when we turn aggression into our human rela-

tions. You can take fire into your home all right, but you have to be mighty careful to have a well built fireplace.

In the same way, the attitudes of the inhabitants of Glasgow towards those of Edinburgh, those of Toronto towards the unfortunates who exist in Montreal, and those of Chicago towards the rest of creation, are relatively harmless if only because of the fact that they can be absorbed into larger loyalties.

This is still tragically far from true of the armed sovereign states. Here and there, exceptional men and women may feel a larger loyalty to science, to humanity, to the idea of a world state. But when the press starts talking (the free press that is often the hand-fed pet of some greedy benefactor, the controlled press that is the trained trumpet of some uncontrollable government), when some adventuring politician who has made the shivering discovery of the fiercely running powers he can set going by tapping the reservoirs of modern hostility, starts sounding off, then the common man has little hope. Some, protected by a lucky psychological development, may be immune to, may be safe from the pestilence as a few were immune to bubonic plague, but the vast majority succumbs. "The Government of the O.C.R.O.W. is taking a course which can only be described as disquieting," mutters the press of the O.B.B. (To avoid confusion with any sovereign state extant, or likely to become extant, let us hasten to say that the first initial stands for the word "Other." Readers may fill in the remaining initials in accordance with the purity of their language.) The adventuring politician, sensing the situation like a carrion crow, shouts to the crowd, "Every citizen will this day recall the words of that great founder of our nation, 'Our country, right or wrong!' Every red-blooded, two-fisted man, every woman who treasures in her heart the better things of life—freedom from foreigners, purity of our race, the complete and unparalleled right of our beloved country to deal with the rest of humanity in full accord with our best interests, regardless—will realize that the Government of the O.B.B.'s is only too clearly living up to its country's descriptive name."

And so the pestilence spreads through quickening weeks and days. The presses roll faster and longer, special announcements break into the radio, crowds begin to wait into the night hours around government offices, women look secretly and agonizingly at their sons, men glance at long familiar things: in a little while neither they nor the things may be there any more. War fever rises to its blood-running crisis.

While a great deal of modern hostility comes from unhappy experiences of innumerable individuals who grew up in homes which were psychologically damaging, crippling, and frustrating, and while a great deal more is due to our thoroughly conscious and deliberate directing of aggression and hostility into relationships between people, much of it, and probably the most rapidly increasing amount, arises indirectly as a sort of poisonous by-product of modern social organization. This is still comparatively unexplored territory. If social scientists had not been forced to spend so much time investigating social life in African, Asiatic, and South American peoples, we should know a good deal more about the jungle life of modern cities. This much we can say: that men require continuous, stable, satisfying relations with other people, that they need to feel sure of being able to manage their own affairs. Where these things are lacking, varying degrees of hostility are apt to appear in a considerable number of people.

Modern city living is a poor place in which to find these satisfying relations, and it is becoming worse. In the cities, mass eating takes the place of family eating, mass spectator-recreation takes much of the place of recreation in a group of friends, family life becomes a thinner thing with every decade, and the worker finds himself a smaller and smaller creature, increasingly anonymous in an industry which is growing bigger by the year.

Hence the exceptional degree of bitterness on the part of striking workers, a bitterness which certainly cannot be accounted for on the basis of the difference between a raise of fifteen cents and nineteen cents an hour.

If, as we hope, world law and world government are set up

within our lifetime, this, while conferring measureless benefits in freeing us from war, at the same time will intensify the problem of the growing anonymity of the common man.

It is by no means an insoluble problem if we can get to work on it. Designs of social organization which would return the man's identity to him, which would restore his confidence in his ability to manage his affairs, his certainty that he would be heard in any major decisions concerning his way of life, can be worked out.

Unfortunately, we are still not looking at him, the living, protesting human being; we are looking at various inventions of our own—the patriot man, the political man, the economic man. These are fragments and abstractions, and the solutions which we can get from working with them are fragmentary and about as satisfying as a square meal in a looking-glass.

But we are not less than we have been, and it is not in our nature to stand still. What we must do is see our world spread neither friendly nor unfriendly around us, a world in which all the little kindly and admonitory gods of the streams and hills and lakes are forever stilled, a world in which we must at last take final responsibility for ourselves, in which all man's works will be his works. Come what may, man will live his life.